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THE MOTIVATIONAL LANDSCAPE OF FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER GAMES

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Abstract <p>The purpose of this research was to gain better understanding of the motivations to play video games, particularly first-person shooter games. The aim was therefore to produce a motivational landscape that describes and categorizes the main motivations to play first-person shooter games (FPS).</p> <p>The study tries to expand the understanding of motivations to play. Therefore, qualitative research method was chosen for gaining a better understanding. The chosen research strategy is case study and the cases used in this study are Battlefield 3 and Counter-Strike: Global Offensive. These two cases represent popular games in FPS-genre. The empirical material was collected by using semi-structured interviews. Total of seven (7) persons were interviewed for this study. All interviewees were Finnish males (ages 22-28) that are experienced gamers.</p> <p>This study expands the motivation research of gaming. From the academic standpoint, the study offers an empirically grounded categorization for analyzing the motivations to play FPS-games: <i>achievement, learning, social interaction, entertainment and escapism</i>. The study gives structure to a complex and elusive subject of motivation, deepens the understanding of the content of the categories and reveals the underlying processes behind it. In addition, the study makes a division between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.</p> <p>From managerial standpoint, the study offers comprehensive and balanced structure for evaluating games in terms of their motivational appeal and may therefore help in game development. Game developers should understand that the game needs to provide enough intrinsic motivation to keep players interested. Extrinsic motivation should be used as something that enhances the gameplay experience without destroying it. In-depth understanding of the player's motivations to play is a vital part of every game company's business decision-making practices. Video game companies should consider motivations to play when they design monetization models for their games. From a societal standpoint, the parents of gamers could benefit from this study by understanding more of what is actually happening when their children play FPS-games.</p>			
Keywords Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, FPS-games, Battlefield, Counter-Strike			
Additional information			

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If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.

-Wayne Dyer

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research topic and the authors, the aim of the research and the research question, methodology, positioning of the study, key concepts and the structure of the research.

1.1 Introduction to the research topic and the authors

The worldwide video game marketplace will reach \$93 billion in 2013 and the market is forecasted to reach \$111 billion by 2015 (Gartner 2013). Finnish gaming industry is currently a \$1 billion industry and it is estimated to grow to \$2 billion by 2020 (Neogames 2013). For comparison, the Finnish gaming industry is ten times bigger than the Finnish film and music industry combined. The Finnish gaming industry is rapidly growing and we have already witnessed global success with titles such as Angry Birds and Clash of Clans. The video game industry as a branch holds an enormous potential to enhance the Finnish economy. Therefore, this subject is extremely important from a national standpoint.

Why do people from all age groups play popular games? Why do people play the same games over and over? They are motivated to do so. Popular game titles are built in a way that they successfully motivate people to play and keep on playing. Therefore, it is vital to know what these motivations are. Games are different in nature and therefore the core motivations to play vary among games. This study sheds light on the motivational landscape of first-person shooter game genre, which is currently dominated by few big titles (Battlefield, Call of Duty, Counter-Strike). Despite the fact that the FPS-genre is well established and that in recent years the games have not changed fundamentally, no comprehensive concept have been made that clearly and profoundly explains the motivational landscape.

Motivation to play games has been studied mainly around loosely defined subjective experiences (Nacke *et al.* 2010). Gaming research focuses mainly on individual constructs and lists of motivations. Yee (2006) made a categorisation of motivations to play massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG). Although

these two genres (FPS, MMORPG) share some motivational similarities, a concept of MMORPG motivations is unsuitable to describe the motivations of FPS-games. Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) studied motivations to play games on a general level without focusing on any specific game genre. We argue that motivations should be studied focusing on a specific game genre. In addition, gaming research lacks in clear conceptualizations instead of lists of motivations that are disconnected from each other. Therefore, a clear research gap exists. This study attempts to conceptualize the motivations of the FPS-genre. Furthermore, the category concept of this study is usable in studying other game genres by adjusting the contents of the main categories.

The results of this study may help game developers when designing new games and making changes to existing games. This study helps them to avoid making mistakes that lead to destroying of players' motivation. We also offer a division between extrinsic and extrinsic motivations, which is important to game developers. In addition, these questions are relevant when designing or changing the game's monetization model. Parents of gamers could benefit from this study by understanding more of what is actually happening when their children play.

The authors of this study are experienced gamers. Our first contact with video games was back in the early 1990s. Together we have over 30 years of experience with games. We are passionate gamers, and we are especially passionate about the first-person shooter genre. Not only do we enjoy playing these games, but also have a vast interest for gaming related business.

We have seen how the genre has evolved over the years. Digitalization of games has opened up opportunities that game developers did not have 10 years ago. Hence, new motivations to play games have surfaced. At the moment there are three different game franchises that dominate the western first-person shooter market. These are Battlefield, Call of Duty and Counter-Strike. For this study we chose Battlefield and Counter-Strike because these are the current games we have most experience with.

Preliminary study of a customer experience in FPS-games (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012) acted as a kick-start to the mysterious world of video game research. It clearly

helped in gaining better understanding of the context concerning this study. This study's theory base benefitted from the work of the preliminary study.

Authors' knowledge and experience have enabled to intuitively synthesize the loosely defined theory base. The pre-understanding has resulted in a way that the experiential knowledge is combined with dispersed constructs in order to get a coherent discussion. With the lack of existing theory it is impossible to achieve both a 'clean' and separate theory section and a sensible narrative. Therefore, we chose to go for a sensible narrative which lead to a more balanced discussion. Hence, the lines of our observations and the theory blur.

Researchers have studied this phenomenon from the inside and as participants. Here are examples of the first-person shooter games that we have experience with: Wolfenstein 3D (1992), Doom (1993), Quake (1995), Team Fortress (1996), Quake 2 (1997), Action Quake 2 (1998), Half-Life (1998), Counter-Strike (1999), Quake 3 (1999), Medal of Honor: Allied Assault (2002), Battlefield 1942 (2002), Call of Duty (2003), Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare (2007), Battlefield 3 (2011) & Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (2012).

1.2 The aim of the research and research questions

The purpose of this research is to gain better understanding of the motivations to play video games, particularly first-person shooter games. The aim is therefore to produce a motivational landscape that describes and categorizes the main motivations to play first-person shooter -games. The justification of an inductive case research depends on the nature of the research question. The research question is typically tightly scoped within the context of an existing theory, and its justification rests heavily on the ability of the qualitative data to extend the existing theory and to offer an insight into complex social processes that quantitative data cannot reveal. (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007.) The motivational categories are formed in a general level from the theory. Motivation to play games is highly context related. Therefore more precise and specific content need to be derived and extended from the empirical context. The

aim of this study is not to test previously created theory in different context, because different contexts require completely different models.

The research question of this study is:

What are the motivations to play First-Person Shooter games?

1.3 Methodology

This study tries to explore and describe the motivations to play FPS games. Therefore we chose to use qualitative methods for gaining a better understanding. The chosen research strategy is case study and the cases are Battlefield 3 and Counter-Strike: Global Offensive. We tried to capture a rich description by carefully selecting experienced gamers, which we thought to represent the majority of the population of FPS-gamers. Interviews were made with semi-structured interviews. We introduce a more detailed description of the methodological choices and the overall research process in the chapter three (3), methodology.

1.4 Positioning the study to the research literature

A motivation is the driving force of human actions. Marketing literature researches consumers' needs, wants and desires, i.e. what motivates consumers. This study is based heavily on motivation theory of the psychology research stream. This is the common ground that links this study to the marketing literature. Although we use the constructs of psychology in this study, we contribute to the marketing literature. This study approaches the topic from the player's point of view.

Research has approached gaming from the user experience standpoint and gameplay has been in the core of the research. This is done by using loosely defined subjective experiences, e.g. flow (see Hsu and Lu 2007; Ryan *et al.* 2006; Särkelä *et al.* 2009) and immersion (see Ermi & Mäyrä 2005; Jennett *et al.* 2008). Other type of research has focused on byproducts or problems with gaming, e.g. violence (Bushman & Anderson, 2002), addiction (Boyle *et al.* 2011; Griffiths 2009; Grüsser *et al.* 2007)

and aggression (Griffiths & Hunt 1998). Some studies have focused on positive outcomes, such as, educational benefits, skill acquisition and usability development to other software branches (Clarke & Duimering 2006). This study does not include the by-products of gaming or problems emerged from it. We confine this study to cover the motivation to play multiplayer first-person shooter games online against other people.

1.5 Key concepts

First-person shooter (FPS)

FPS-games are fast-paced and goal directed activity, i.e. shooting enemies, that takes place in complex, dynamic behavioural environments where gamers must quickly adapt to situations and respond with appropriate actions. Each person controls a single game character and experiences the game from a first-person perspective. Commonly the characters behaviour, health and survivability conform to known scientific laws – to an extent. (Clarke & Duimering 2006.)

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (Counter-Strike, CS or CS: GO)

In Counter-Strike a team of terrorists compete against a team of counter-terrorists in a series of rounds. Counter-Strike: Global Offensive offers highly competitive infantry only gameplay. The movement is simplified and the aiming is skill based. The amount of options the players have is limited.

Battlefield 3 (BF or BF3)

In Battlefield 3 two teams fight for victory in the battlefield. The game includes different infantry classes, which all have different roles. The game also includes several land, sea and air vehicles the players can control. Battlefield 3 offers a more casual (in terms of competition) and versatile gameplay experience than Counter-Strike. The players are given tons of different options to choose from.

1.6 Structure of the research

After the introduction we present the literature review in chapter two (2) motivational landscape of gaming. A more precise introduction of the structure of the literature review is presented in the beginning of the chapter two (2). Next, in chapter three (3), methodology, we present a detailed description of methodological choices, research process and interviewees. Then in chapter four (4), empirical research, we introduce the context of this study and analyse the empirical data. At the end of the chapter four (4), we present results and introduce the empirically fulfilled concept of the motivational landscape to play FPS games. In chapter five (5), discussion, we look at some additional findings that came up during the interviews. Finally, in the chapter (6) conclusions, we present conclusions and the theoretical contribution of this study, evaluate validity and reliability of the study, offer further research suggestions and propose managerial and societal implications.

2 MOTIVATIONAL LANDSCAPE OF GAMING

In this chapter we discuss the motivational landscape of gaming. First, we introduce the topic in a general level, present the division of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and discuss briefly the five motivational categories. Then we move our discussion to each motivational category individually. These are *achievement*, *learning*, *entertainment*, *social* and *escapism*. Finally, we present the theoretical framework of this study.

2.1 Introduction to motivations to play games

First, we introduce the topic in a general level. Then we present the division of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Finally, we discuss individually and briefly of each relevant category constituting to the motivation to play games.

Popularity of video games suggests that they satisfy the human basic needs, and therefore cannot be determined in terms of good or bad. Instead, games could be examined from a motivational perspective by exploring the needs and motives behind playing them, i.e. specific desirable or undesirable aims and categories of aims. (Demetrovics *et al.* 2011.) We should keep in mind that there exist different motivations to play in different game genres, and even different motivations to play different games inside the same game genre. Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) tried to capture a general motivational landscape to gaming that includes different game genres. We argue that such a view is too inconclusive, and that each game genre requires a motivational landscape of its own.

In this study we are discussing two FPS games, which might seem as identical to an unaccustomed eye, but in reality possess a lot of motivational differences when the motivations are divided into different categories. Some of the gaming research is made in the context of Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing games. These games are very different in nature and findings done in that context are not very usable in our study. However, we use sometimes these MMORPG examples to illustrate better our context and how it differentiates.

Research in game enjoyment is still in its early days (Boyle *et al.* 2011). Video games are studied many times from their negative impacts, and are seen to promote violence, addiction (Boyle *et al.* 2011; Griffiths 2009) and aggression (Griffiths & Hunt 1998). Some studies have focused on positive outcomes, such as, educational benefits, skill acquisition and usability development to other software branches (Clarke & Duimering 2006). We see these outcomes as by-products of gaming.

Early studies revealed gaming to give excitement, satisfaction of doing well, tension reduction (Wigand *et al.* 1985), and to answer to seeking of fantasy, curiosity, challenge and interactivity (Myers 1990). Selnow (1984) researched video game playing and found five factors: gameplay is preferable with human companions, it teaches about people, gameplay provides companionships, activity and solitude/escape. Study conducted by Sherry *et al.* (2006) resulted in six dominant dimensions of video game use; arousal, challenge, competition, diversion, fantasy and social interaction. Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) developed seven motives for online gaming from a goal perspective: social, escape, competition, coping, skill development, fantasy and recreation.

The gaming literature concerning the enjoyment or fun of gaming and the motivation to play is an elusive field. Firstly, we do not know enough about the subject neither on a general level or context-specific level. Secondly, there exists a severe lack of basic conceptualizations. We chose to use categories because we wanted structure to this research. We needed categories that could include all the relevant information from the previous research. This required for a lot of synthesizing of previous research, which consisted of loosely defined and disconnected constructs. As a result of literature review, we created a concept of five categories that tries to capture the motivational landscape of FPS-games in particular; *achievement*, *learning*, *entertainment*, *social* and *escapism*. Each category contains elements that contribute to the motivation to play video games. These elements represent the combination of previous findings from the literature and the ones found in this study. One should keep in mind that these categories hold strong interdependencies and connectedness. Also, the contents of these motivational categories are likely to change when studying games that represent different game genres.

2.1.1 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations

In addition to forming a categorization of motivations, the concept of this study divides the motivational elements into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. According to Ryan & Deci (2000) intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome. They continue that the quality of experience and performance can be very different when one is behaving for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons, because an intrinsically motivated person acts for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external pressures or rewards. External pressures and rewards represent extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation exist in-between a person and a task. It has been defined in terms of interesting task or the satisfaction that a person gets from engaging in a task. It is useful to focus on task properties and their potential intrinsic interest for improving task design to enhance motivation. (Ryan & Deci 2000.) Game designers should be aware of the motivational difference depending on the content and activities created to gamers. Some parts enhance the intrinsic motivation and some the extrinsic motivation. In addition, some parts of a game may even be destructive to players' motivation. For example, Blizzard changed their intrinsically motivating loot system of the Diablo series to an extrinsically motivating system (auction house), which then destroyed the players' motivation to play the game. Blizzard has acknowledged their mistake and promised to fix the system.

“But as we’ve mentioned on different occasions, it became increasingly clear that despite the benefits of the AH system and the fact that many players around the world use it, it ultimately undermines Diablo’s core game play: kill monsters to get cool loot. With that in mind, we want to let everyone know that we’ve decided to remove the gold and real-money auction house system from Diablo III.” (Blizzard 2013)

Intrinsic motivation is clearly a type of motivation relevant to computer game participation (Ryan *et al.* 2006). Hsu and Lu (2007) found in their study that intrinsic

motives (entertainment, fun, curiosity, exploration, flow) increases user's commitment toward the game. We argue that these intrinsic motivations are the elements that influence strongest to the motivation to choose a particular game. Intrinsically motivated players play because they enjoy exploring the game and improving their skills or they like the thrill. Extrinsically motivated players play in order to receive something positive or to avoid something negative that is separate from the activity (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012). These elements can easily represent enhancing or destructing forces to a player's motivation.

2.1.2 The five motivational categories of FPS games

Achievement is a basic motivation for human beings. Vorderer *et al.* (2011) point out that interactive entertainment tends to have more to do with achievement than with relaxation and idleness. They continue that gamers strive for achievement and competition and choose games that promise to challenge their abilities. In-game rewards represent extrinsically motivated individuals (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012).

Learning as a source of motivation refers in this study to subjects of improving one's skills and becoming a better player. Games and learning is widely researched subject from the instrumental point of view, e.g. learning English while playing, which is then seen beneficial outside of the gaming usage. We confine these 'by-products' out of the focus of this study. In addition, we shed light on extrinsic motivations, but only those that are directly beneficial to the game experience, e.g. learning with awards.

Entertainment products aim at giving enjoyment. However, we need to find out where that enjoyment comes from. What other feelings players experience while gaming? What really constitutes the feeling of enjoyment? Enjoyment is clearly a motivation to play games but we need to know more of it.

Social interaction was the reason why many individuals got involved in playing video games in the first place (Sherry *et al.* 2006). We discuss social dimension as a contributor to motivation to play games in terms of multiplayer nature of the game,

interaction between gamers, communication and collaboration with teammates, recognition and power in the gaming community. Admiration and recognition from other players represent extrinsically motivated individuals (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012).

Escapism is likely to be more relevant category in MMORPG environment. It refers usually to the fantasy side of gaming. In addition, escapism involves terms such as immersion and presence, which refers to a situation where players are so extremely focused on gaming that they forget everything else around them. Escapism covers also a discussion of how the game environment and actions taken within it might vary compared to real world in the eyes of FPS-players.

2.2 Achievement

In this chapter we discuss achievement. This chapter consists of *challenge*, *competition* and *rewards*. The concept of flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1977) is strongly connected to challenge and is therefore also discussed in this chapter, but only as a Flow-balance. Flow as a feeling or a state of mind is discussed later in the chapter 2.4 Entertainment. Challenge is described by using the notions of abilities and flow-balance. We begin this chapter by discussing challenge. Then we move our discussion to competition and finally we examine rewards.

2.2.1 Challenge

Providing the gamers with challenges is a very profound view to video game making. The single-player games in the 1990's were extremely difficult to play through. The overwhelming challenge aspect in games resulted in frustration among some gamers. Thereafter, in terms of difficulty, the single-player challenge has been notched down so that the majority of players are able to complete games. In modern FPS-titles the role of single-player experience is trivialized and the focus is on multi-player. Single-player campaigns are still included to show off graphics and justify the full price. However, the ideology of 'every player should succeed' is not only limited to single-player games, but is integrated in some popular multiplayer games as well. In Battlefield 3 players of all ability levels can succeed in the beginner friendly multiplayer challenge. This approach is opposite to what the highly competitive games, such as Counter-Strike, offer.

In FPS-games, fast decision-making, being in control of the character and the situation are challenges. The multiplayer environment in our context is about gamers competing against other gamers. Succeeding in a task and eventually beating the opponent depend on the team's ability to perform. PVP (player-vs.-player) brings unlimited possibilities to challenge because you always find different opponents and the game is always different (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012).

Perhaps the most famous theoretical model assessing the challenge is the concept of Flow. The ‘flow’ model is often used when discussing challenges and abilities. The ‘flow’ model was pioneered by Csikszentmihalyi (1977), and it has been studied in a wide range of contexts including sports, work, shopping, games, hobbies, and computer use (Novak *et al.* 2000). Novak *et al.* (2000) studied the construct of flow as a way of defining the nature of a compelling online experience. Särkelä *et al.* (2009) used ‘flow’ to examine user experience in the context of computer gaming. The ‘flow’ model describes different states where abilities and challenges meet, and the state of ‘flow’, which refers to a psychological state of concentration (Csikszentmihalyi 1977), which leads to enjoyment (Liu *et al.* 2013). Novak *et al.* (2000) came to a conclusion that both abilities and challenge contribute individually to ‘flow’. We agree that the Flow-balance is an important element to the players’ motivation. However, in a multiplayer environment the challenge consists of a task-based challenges and challenges from the social interaction.

The challenge aspect needs to be at a certain level so that a game situation remains enjoyable (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). The ‘flow’ occurs in gaming when the game is worth playing for its own sake, i.e. intrinsically motivating, and when the ability of the gamer and challenges the gamer faces are both high. The flow experience is a pleasant experience and it is attained through meaningful, fluent and efficient actions. Persons in a state of flow are fully absorbed into their current actions and feel motivated, happy and cognitively efficient. Flow leads to better results, faster learning and happier users. (Särkelä *et al.* 2009.) If the players do not reach the ‘flow’ state when they play, they end up having some other type of feelings. For example, gaming becomes boring when the game fails to provide enough challenge, and when the challenge is too high, the players become frustrated (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012).

Novak *et al.* (2000) state, that it is important to provide consumers with ‘flow opportunities’ because when the consumer achieves the ‘flow’ state, the task becomes most enjoyable. In multiplayer games, the gamers should be provided with a playground, where they can attain a balance between abilities and challenges, from both the individual and team perspectives. In Battlefield 3 the ability levels of teammates may not have to be high as long as they play the objective. However,

players who are not able to contribute to the teamwork have no function in the game. (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012.)

According to Liu *et al.* (2013) players have the opportunity to play with players of varying skill levels. Their findings indicate that, when players compete with others of equal skill levels, they will spend more effort and play for longer durations. Hence, it is safe to assume that equal ability levels enhance the motivation to play. The game session is ruined if the challenge is too high or low for the team (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012.) A challenge too high may lead to frustration, which means that people stop communicating, the atmosphere turns into negative, and players don't feel like playing anymore (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). However, if players are winning against the odds, they report higher feelings of enjoyment (Liu *et al.* 2013).

2.2.2 Competition

Competition in our context refers to a contest in which two parties strive for superiority or victory. An orientation toward victory or beating the opponent represents an element of extrinsic motivation (Holbrook *et al.* 1984). One of the most common reasons for playing video games is to prove to other players who are able to react or think the fastest (Sherry *et al.* 2006). In any game or sport where the element of competition is involved, there occurs both the joy of beating the opponent and the frustration of being defeated. Some people take competition more seriously than others, and Holbrook *et al.* (1984) stated that emotions and performance depend on how a person's own personality interacts with the nature of the game. Online FPS-games are often competitive in their nature and are seldom played by those who are discouraged by competition.

There are many different competitive modes in FPS-games. These can be, e.g. team deathmatch (frag most enemies), capture the flag (attack and defend at the same time), demolition (one team attacks while the other team defends), conquest (capture and defend objectives) etc. There exist various different forms of competitive play, e.g. public games (jump in and play), clan wars (a predetermined match between two teams or 'clans'), tournaments (online and LAN), ladders (solo and/or team) etc.

Players can compete as part of a random team, predetermined teams or predetermined groups in public games. The level of competition varies and there are several different forms of competition. Online public gaming can be seen as the most casual form of competition, e.g. playing Battlefield 3 on a random server for fun. Electronic Sports (eSports) is the most serious form of competition, e.g. professional teams competing in Counter-Strike: Global Offensive over a \$250,000 prize pool on stage in front of a live audience (Dreamhack 2013). FPS gamers can also compete indirectly via statistics (such as 'rank' in Battlefield 3).

According to Liu *et al.* (2013) in online games players have the opportunity to compete with others of varying ability levels. We argue that in more casual FPS-games (Battlefield 3), this opportunity is very limited. In competitive games (Counter-Strike) the players can truly test their abilities and put them to the limit. Competition aspect has gone forward in all games in a sense that competition is now more versatile than ever. The games offer diverse statistics which create more indirect competition between gamers. Concerning the seriousness of the competition, games have become separated to those where professional gaming is present (e.g. Counter-Strike) and to those where it is not (e.g. Battlefield 3).

Gamers with competitive backgrounds may consider the level of competition in Battlefield 3 to be extremely low (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). The element is still there, but it is no longer as intense of an experience as it is with competitive games. This might be frustrating for gamers seeking the ultimate competition, but it serves the rest of the gamers who only seek to play casual. Winning a match in casual games can be really important for some. For others, the outcome of a match is not as important as how it happened. If the match was otherwise enjoyable, losing was not the end of the world. In our previous study some respondents answered that losing doesn't bother them at all. However, by analysing their other answers, it turned out that respondents actually were bothered about the loss to some extent (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012).

Liu *et al.* (2013) divide competition into direct and indirect competition. In direct competition the competition is integral. In indirect competition the player does not directly influence on another player's performance. Competition in online

scoreboards, e.g. ‘who has the most kills with helicopter in Battlefield 3’, is an example of the indirect competition. Some people do not wish to engage in direct competition and tend to choose games which have only indirect competitive elements, if any. The reason for this may be that in indirect competition you cannot clearly determine who won or lost the competition or who is best in some other terms. In an indirectly competitive game you can catch up others by playing more. Indirect competition differs from direct competition in one crucial matter: the player cannot lose.

Today the most important thing seems to be collecting points, achieving rank and unlocking new items rather than the placement in the competitive ladder, and the ‘real’ competition gets little attention. (Kuoppala and Finneman 2012.) Adding tons of new content and options to the game (Battlefield 3) results in imbalance and is game breaking in terms of high level competition. In practise, if the game aims to be competitive, the amount of content and options have to be limited (Counter-Strike).

2.2.3 Rewards

If a game extrinsically rewards the player for winning and punishes the player for losing (Counter-Strike), the players become either really motivated to win, or lose the motivation entirely. In Battlefield 3, the players are not punished for losing, which can make them care less about the outcome of the game. Instead, the players are rewarded for both winning and losing (‘everybody wins’). Some more competitively motivated players may find this approach incorrect, because they do not recognize a real winner unless there is a loser too. In more competitive games only winners are rewarded (e.g. status symbols, ELO-rating, medals, money). Symbolic rewards such as status or praise alone can drive competition (Liu *et al.* 2013).

‘Achievements’ are one of the first means of rewarding the player in video games. Both Counter-Strike and Battlefield 3 use achievements to provide the players with something to chase after. In FPS-games it is typical that a certain amount of kills with a certain weapon gets the player the ‘achievement’, which could be seen as

some kind of a proof of actual achievement. These achievements may be meaningful to some players and may motivate them to play more.

Battlefield 3 uses 'rank' and unlocking features to extrinsically motivate players. These features make gamers want to play more and stay in the game longer, but also give the player an advantage and make them better performers (e.g. armed with better weapons). Unlocks can also work as tools to guide players' behaviour and make them learn things. (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012.) Applying this kind of extrinsic rewards to games may weaken the intrinsic motivation of the player, i.e. interest in doing the task itself. Problems arise when players are asked to do a certain task, which they do not wish to do, but they have to because they want the reward (e.g. a new weapon). The game 'commands' the players what to do next rather than players figure it out themselves, and create their own experience.



Figure 1. Modified XBOX 360 achievement

2.3 Learning

We begin this chapter with a brief discussion how learning and game research is generally combined. In this study, learning is confined in three main subjects contributing to the motivation to play games: *becoming a better player* and *learning with awards*. We discuss what becoming a better player means (i.e. improving skills) and what motivates players to develop their skills. Then we discuss different ways video game developers train the players and focus on learning with external rewards.

Wood *et al.* (2004) noticed that there may be positive benefits from playing video games such as better problem solving skills, communication and team building skills. In addition, gamers learn English because they need to use it to play games. They are intrinsically motivated to play and learn the games, while improvement of English skills emerges as a ‘by-product’ of learning to play. This is why most purely educational games may fail to nurture the gamers’ willingness to play. Learning the by-products, such as English skills or improving reflexes just for the sake of it, are unlikely motivations to play a certain game. We are interested to shed light on why certain people choose a particular game and why they choose to play them. Intrinsically motivating activities in gaming are likely to be in the core of the gamers’ motivational landscape to play.

2.3.1 *Becoming a better player*

According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) skill is a matter of how players address the game’s challenges to reach its objectives and rewards. They distinguish two types of skill: interactive and cognitive. Interactive skill refers to the player’s ability to interact effectively with the controls and carry out specific actions that represent specific events. In FPS-games this means e.g. how well the player shoots (i.e. hand-eye coordination) and how fluently the player moves. Cognitive skill refers to the players’ ability to understand, assimilate, remember and use different concepts or

information. In FPS-games this means ‘game sense’, i.e. how well the player can make the right decisions accordingly to the situation in the game.

It is through acting on one’s inherent interests that one grows in knowledge and develops skills (Ryan & Deci 2000). Sherry *et al.* (2006) noticed that many respondents enjoy playing video games to push themselves to a higher level of skill or personal accomplishment. Holbrook *et al.* (1984) mention that performance in video games depends primarily on ability and learning, and that positive affect increases with mastery of the game. Players can learn interactive skills mainly by playing the game. Highly skilled players possess ability to overcome challenges and develop their skills further during play (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). Cognitive skills evolve with time. Players can learn cognitive skills in different ways, e.g. playing the game, watching a video or reading an article. In FPS games there is a common word for cognitive skill, which is ‘game sense’. It refers to the player’s awareness and understanding of the game situation, and the ability to choose the right action accordingly. Successful execution of the chosen action is then dependent heavily on the player’s interactive skills. Becoming a better player is not only about learning interactive and cognitive skills. It is important that player learns to work as a part of a team. It is also important that the player learns mental toughness, i.e. the ability to consistently perform towards the upper range of his or her skill. All players are individuals and Holbrook *et al.* (1984) found that performance depends on various ability-related individual characteristics.

According to Sherry *et al.* (2006) many prefer to play a familiar set of games that they feel confident playing. According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) habitual players in particular genres (such as FPS-games) or previous version of a game have experience that makes assimilating new concepts and understanding the gameplay easier for them. They continue by defining ‘learnability’ as the player’s capacity to understand and master the game’s system and mechanics (objectives and rules how to interact with the video game). For example, to a newly released FPS-game, habitual FPS-players already have basic genre skills, which allow them to instantly perform better than players who are new to the genre. In practice, it is easier to learn a new game of the same genre than of another genre, because of the different skill sets required.

Also, if a player is accustomed to performing well, they might feel uncomfortable playing a new genre which they do not master.

The learning curve in games has changed over time in a way that the modern games tend to be easier and faster to learn. This is the case with most of the popular FPS-titles such as Battlefield and Call of Duty. In video games we play with the ‘learning curve’ according to the nature of the game (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). Battlefield and Call of Duty are casual games meant for a wide audience. Therefore, their approach is that gamers should quickly learn to play and to reach the flow-state earlier for not getting frustrated. This means that anyone with basic knowledge of the game has the possibility to experience success.

Learning to play a game and learning to be a master in a game are completely different things. Battlefield 3 offers gamers possibilities to learn all kinds of things if they are willing to, e.g. learning to play infantry, ground vehicles, airplanes and helicopters. A Battlefield 3 player can quickly learn to be a contributing member of the team as foot soldier or a tank driver, but it takes a lot of time to become an expert fighter pilot. This means that there are different roles in the game, which have different learning curves. Difficulty of multiplayer gaming may be higher or lower depending on how steep the learning curve is relative to the player’s skills (Sánchez *et al.* 2012), and also relative to other players’ skills. Some are motivated to learn the basics of the game (casual attitude towards gaming) and some players are motivated to learn the hardest roles (a more serious and competitive attitude towards gaming). A game may also demand high initial skill level before playing (Sánchez *et al.* 2012), and Counter-Strike is one of these games. It demands a lot of initial interactive FPS-skill (moving, aiming), but also particular cognitive skills related to Counter-Strike (awareness, timing, decision making) before a player can cope with the competition. To put it briefly: killing an opponent in Counter-Strike is very hard. Difficulty of FPS-games can be seen as something that makes certain players to choose to play certain games. If a Battlefield 3 player learns to be a master of the game, they are still facing the same opponents, thus making it harder for them to find challenge. The challenge in Counter-Strike grows as the player learns to be better.

2.3.2 *Learning with awards*

Deciding on how to train the players to play a game is one of the big decisions of video game developing. The game companies may choose to train the players in a casual manner, in which the game holds the player's hand all the way. In a hard-core approach, the game does not hold the player's hand, teaching the player is trial and error based, and the player may need external help to play the game. Between these two approaches is 'learning with awards'. We discussed in the previous chapter how 'achievements' have become popular in video games. Video game companies have started to use 'achievements' and different awards as tools to train the player. Players can learn step-by-step in a guided fashion when they need to develop a particular ability needed in the game (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). The game does not particularly hold the player's hand, but it gives the player a push to a direction, which the player then can choose to leave or take. The game companies can help gamers to learn the game skills by generating learning-relevant goals. Battlefield 3 trains its players. Battlefield 3 has vast amount of locked weapons, items and perks. The unlock features work as tools for teaching the player. Players gradually learn more and more by unlocking new items and then learning to use them while unlocking the next item. Unlocking items can be seen as a motivation in itself and can make players want to play more and stay in the game longer. (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012.) Awards can be used to teach the players the basics of the game without handing them too much information at once. Awards can keep players focused on a task and they learn new things while completing it.

2.4 Entertainment

In this chapter we discuss gaming as *emotions & feelings*, *creative use* and *novelty* aspect of games as a source of motivation. Gaming is part of the entertainment business. Therefore, entertainment products try to answer to people's desire to seek entertaining and enjoying experiences. There are more studies about subjective feelings in the context of more traditional form of entertainment such as movies and sports. This dimension of subjective feelings alone, if done comprehensively, would require a study for its own. We are curious about shedding light on the key motives connected to gaming. Hence, we do not seek to ground all the possible emotions and feelings, which act as motives to play, but to create a brief discussion that describes the entertainment category in a balanced way.

The gaming research has found some of the key emotions underpinning the motives for gaming. However, the research of emotional base as part of motivational landscape for gaming is somewhat thin both in quantity and quality. We noticed that enjoyment and having fun are widely used in gaming research as a motivation to play games (see Clarke & Duimering 2006; Jansz & Tanis 2007). We argue that enjoyment could be seen as an emotional outcome of gaming. Furthermore, it is of value to research the emotional base underpinning that enjoyment as an outcome.

In the study of Sherry *et al.* (2006) respondents described time filling, relaxation, escaping stress and lack of other activities as reasons to play video games. The motivations are different in nature. Some of them are feelings, e.g. relaxation. Escaping stress is escaping to somewhere or managing the mood (discussed later). The lack of other activities and killing time represent functional values of gaming as an entertainment product. An example of this kind of games could be, e.g. Angry Birds, which you can play while waiting for the bus.

2.4.1 Emotions & feelings

Vorderer *et al.* (2011) define enjoyment of entertainment products to include references to physiological, cognitive and affective in nature. We find this multidimensional and subjective feeling to be in the very core of understanding the motivational landscape of gaming. Hedonistic view assumes that humans are as entertainment users driven by desire for cheerfulness or fun in their usage and neglect the complexity of entertainment experiences (Holbrook *et al.* 1984). This motivation is mostly captured with a term of enjoyment. The idea is that a player does something, feels about it in some way or reacts to it somehow, and thereafter it results in enjoyment after a subjective evaluation. In this study we try to describe these activities that players take, explore and describe feelings and reactions that emerge, which later on might turn into enjoyment and satisfaction. Enjoyment is most commonly seen as a positive outcome of gaming, i.e. having fun. However, audience can but not necessarily feel negative emotions (e.g. sadness, melancholy and anxious) as a source of enjoyment. Further research of negative emotions as contributors of enjoyment is needed (Boyle *et al.* 2011). Do we really know what they feel? For example, enjoyment comes as an outcome of flow state after the flow state is experienced (see Csikszentmihalyi 1997). Therefore, we are curious from a research perspective to learn about the emotional base connected to gaming. As said before, in this study we try to find the key emotions that result especially in willingness to play. It is relatively likely that not all emotions impact to the motivation to play in a reasonable level.

The motivation to consume entertainment products is often to change the current emotions one might have. Individuals make an obvious choice of enhancing or perpetuating one's current mood by the selection of a particular entertainment (Vorderer *et al.* 2011.) In their studies Vorderer *et al.* (2011) used a construct of *mood management* and Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) used *recreation* to describe this notion of intentionally seeking to change one's emotions. Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) described gaming also as a way to *channel and cope with distress and aggression*. In terms of mood management, FPS-games are an interesting subject. We question whether this mood management suits to games like FPS-games where gaming requires a lot of concentration, conceptual thinking and high activity levels.

Furthermore, FPS-games do not offer an outcome of feelings that would be known for certain before starting to play the game. This outcome of gaming in a sense of entertaining experience can be anything between, e.g. extreme outburst of hatred or extreme satisfaction. Hence, FPS-games may not be suited for gamers who seek to change their bad mood for a better one.

When discussing emotions connected to gaming *arousal* has commonly risen. Arousal can be seen both as positive and negative emotions depending on the situation. Arousal as a negative emotion may turn into positive emotion such as *euphoria* and *relief*, which explains why entertainment users are willing to suffer from some rather unpleasant emotions. (Vorderer *et al.* 2011.) When an important match is close and the score goes back and forth, the players' heart rates are definitely elevated. The outcome of the match can decide if arousal leads to positive emotions. After a close and emotional match the players can feel fatigued.

In the literature construct of *relaxation* (see Sherry *et al.* 2006) and *tension-reduction* (see Wigan *et al.* 1985) emerged to describe a player's relaxed and easy-going emotional state as an outcome of gaming. Relaxation decreases the players' level of concentration, which affects their gameplay negatively, and can therefore be seen as unwanted.

Novak *et al.* (2000) described *flow* as an ultimate state of *focus*, where a person leaves little attention to anything else. Therefore flow can be examined as an emotion or as used earlier in this study (chapter of achievement), as a concept to describe the optimal abilities and challenge balance. You could also say that a person who is in a state of flow is immersed in the game. Flow state makes the player forget everything else in life for a while and just focus on the task in hand. In the study of Ijsselsteijn *et al.* (2007), some gamers mentioned feeling *emotionally drained* after the game session.

Vorderer *et al.* (2011) gathered from theory some key emotions to describe what kind of feeling an entertainment products create, but also stated that the list is not sufficient enough to cover the subject comprehensively, and that the emotions experienced do not consist all of them but in various and varying combinations:

- Serenity, exhilaration, and, as a behavioural component, laughter as a manifestation of enjoyment through comedy
- Suspense—that is, thrill, fear, and relief as the most frequent response to drama
- Sadness, melancholy, thoughtfulness, and tenderness.
- Sensory delight or pleasure of the senses can be found in cases of aesthetically appealing media offerings
- Sense of achievement, control, and self-efficacy is associated with playing computer games (Vorderer *et al.* 2011)

Key emotions gathered by Vorderer *et al.* (2011) illustrate what kind of different feelings the gamers experience. In addition, this list is applicable for showing how diverse the field of feelings is. FPS-games are competitive in nature and require an active participation, which may suggest that ‘suspense’ and ‘sense of achievement’ may play the major role in the gamer’s emotional experience.

Physical reactions as extensions of emotions & feelings

Frostling-Henningson (2009) noticed in her observation study that FPS gamers had *physical reactions* (sighted, cried out loud, changed position in chair or interrupted the game) every time that they got shot. These physical reactions express player’s emotions and can also be seen as extensions of player’s feelings. For example getting shot in the game can have different meanings. In Battlefield 3, the player re-spawns (is brought back to life) immediately after dying. However, in Counter-Strike the player is out of the game after dying and has to wait for the next round. Therefore, dying means more in Counter-Strike than in Battlefield 3, and might provoke more physical reactions (Counter-Strike was used in the study of Frostling-Henningson 2009). These physical reactions prove that players definitely experience strong

emotions and feelings while gaming. Physical reactions are interesting mainly from the viewpoint of reactions as an extension of emotions and feelings, which then makes it easier to observe those emotions and feelings.

2.4.2 Creative use

People can also use entertainment products in a creative way, i.e. the way they were not designed to be used. In Frostling-Henningson's (2009) study there were two teenage girls who played Counter-Strike together and were unwilling to kill each other, which is the main objective of the game. Still they had fun playing the game in their own way, making up their own rules and neglecting the main point and the real rules of the game. In Battlefield 3 players can do different things that are outside the main gameplay. A player might be motivated to accomplish in extraordinary actions such as blowing up a fighter plane with a jeep packed with C4 explosives. This serves as an example of the complexity of motivations that drive to consume entertainment products.

2.4.3 Novelty

Myers (1990) found that gaming answers to seeking of novelty (curiosity). This is a profound motivation of human beings. Novelty refers to how new things are always exciting. A new game can be exciting because there is so much new to experience. On the other hand an old game, which is updated, can also answer to this same motivation. Players were motivated to continue playing the game if its content would continuously be updated (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). In the past there were situations where the community would continue the unofficial development of a popular game when the developer company had abandoned it. The community would create new content (e.g. maps, modifications) which kept the players interested. Some of the most popular games today have their origins in modifications, e.g. Counter-Strike (mod for Half-Life), DayZ (mod for Arma 2) & DOTA (custom map for Warcraft 3). However, today it is common for game companies to disallow such development and the releasing of new content is entirely up to the company itself.

Game series such as Battlefield and Call of Duty have answered to need of novelty by releasing several scheduled 'expansion packs' (include new maps, weapons etc.), which the players can buy before the new version of the game comes out. The players can be motivated by knowing that the game will be updated.

2.5 Social

In this chapter we discuss the social side of motivation to play games. The social category is discussed by using subjects of social interaction, teamwork, communication and recognition.

We argue that there is a fundamental difference between, e.g. the social media games and games such as Battlefield and Counter-Strike. Most of the social network games (Farmville, Clash of Clans etc.) are games you actually play alone. Then, the social interaction is done by sharing and caring for others. Therefore, the social interaction is somewhat superficial and detached from the core gameplay. In multiplayer FPS you play together and against. Social interaction is inbuilt and direct in the core gameplay, and it exists regardless whether the player wants it or not.

Takatalo *et al.* (2006) point out that social interaction gives the game its meaning and relevance. The interviewees in the study by Clarke & Duimering (2006) valued social benefits of playing with other people and friends, having fun, chatting, teasing, learning play tips and techniques. They identified in their study several multi-player preferences; social properties, challenge associated with playing against other human players, human player behaviour and technical concerns.

Multiplayer gaming sets a completely unique set of elements to gaming experience regarding challenges and competition. It is a completely different experience for gamers to play against artificial intelligence than against other human beings. A study by Hainey *et al.* (2011) revealed that gamers with multiplayer preference are significantly more motivated by challenge, competition, cooperation and recognition than gamers with single-player preference. According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) multiplayer is a collective experience which makes players appreciate the game in a different way, thanks to the relationships with other players. They continue that in an online multiplayer team game the objectives and the responsibility for working towards them are shared, and so is victory (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). Multiplayer gamers find the actions of a computer controlled enemy to be always somewhat predictable, which can lead to a boring gaming experience. There is also

no real competition unless you are playing against someone who is flesh and blood. The notion of challenge in multiplayer gaming is tightly connected to the competitive elements, which are made possible by the social interaction. Clarke & Duimering (2006) made findings that gamers view the challenge and competition associated with playing human against human very positively, especially when skill levels were matched.

2.5.1 Social interaction

Sherry *et al.* (2006) see social interaction to be the main reason why many individuals got involved in playing video games in the first place. They continue that many use video games to interact with friends and learn about the personalities of others. Gaming online is clearly not an activity motivated by a wish to be alone, but is highly socially motivated (Frostling-Henningsson 2009; Jansz & Tanis 2007). The most prominent of the motivations for game use are social in nature (Sherry *et al.* 2006). Jansz & Tanis (2007) found the social interaction motive to be the strongest predictor of the time spent on gaming. They continue that gamers may actively create new social networks around their gaming activities. Virtual worlds replace the real with a simulacrum, which allows gamers to evaluate other gamers on personal qualities and gaming style rather than on physical appearance (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). In virtual worlds the groups may consist of people who would not normally interact in the real world.

2.5.2 Teamwork

Killing enemies together motivates gamers and it provides gamers with a sense of togetherness through teamwork (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). Socially motivated gaming often occurs among a group of friends competing against each other or in teams (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). FPS-gamers may belong to groups that consist of their friends and friends of friends (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012), or to more serious groups a.k.a. clans or teams. The members of the group work collaboratively

towards a mutual goal. To get there, group members can encourage and motivate themselves and each other to overcome collective challenges (Sánchez *et al.* 2012).

FPS gamers often seek for sense of cohesion, social interaction and cooperation. Playing with friends under the same name-tag create a sense of cohesion and allows for other players to recognize name-tag users (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). Interacting with a gaming group can promote new social relationships (Sánchez *et al.* 2012), and also deepen the real-life friendships (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). Collaboration, such as enemies killing together, can be interpreted as a way of connecting to people as “brothers in blood” (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). The option to play with an intentionally formed group is preferred, because players know what kind of social interaction and collaboration they are exposed to with known group members. Frequent game play with a group can be seen as a similar experience to a group of guys shooting baskets at the park, but with a different location (Sherry *et al.* 2006).

Gaming offers the possibility to connect with people in new and unexpected ways irrespective of physical appearance, gender and age (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). The other option for group formation is to let the game system to do it automatically (of unknown people). Then, players do not know what they are going to get in terms of social interaction and collaboration, if any. However, reflecting to their past experiences (with a particular game), the players have expectations of what these could be.

Players must understand that they are a part of a group and that the success of the group depends on achieving shared objectives (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). Problems occur when people do not get along with each other and fail to play collaboratively. Players need to be aware of their role in the group’s success and identify with it (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). Randomly chosen and continuously changing group members create confusion when players try to find their role in the group. A clash of different generations and player types can be a destructive force to the gaming experience (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012).

Sánchez *et al.* defines (2012) the player's interaction in three categories: competitive, collaborative and cooperative. Competitive interaction means orientation towards personal success. In collaborative interaction, individual success is replaced with group success. Cooperative interaction combines the previous two approaches by intertwining individual and group success. A player with an orientation towards personal success can disturb the teamwork when the orientation should be towards collaborative behaviour. Cooperative refers to playing, e.g. single-player campaigns together with a friend (not against other players). Teamwork in team FPS games (Battlefield 3, Counter-Strike) can be seen similar to teamwork in e.g. football (Frostling-Henningsson 2009), where success requires for functional collaboration between players and group chemistry. The respondents of the study by Frostling-Henningsson (2009) saw the ability to work in a team to be crucial. Communication has an important role in both collaborative and cooperative interaction.

2.5.3 Communication

Sánchez *et al.* defines (2012) communication to be one of the defining factors of socialisation in a game. Communication can occur at different levels and is not limited to the gaming situation. Gaming also provides the opportunity to discuss more profound subject, such as personal problems in the real world. (Frostling-Henningsson 2009.)

User's sense of being there on the site with other participants is one of the key prerequisites of entertainment experience (Vorderer et al 2011). FPS-games are fast paced and there is rarely enough time to communicate by writing. Therefore voice communication is often used for creating tactics and strategies interactively during the game session. It makes it easier to ask for help and help friends. (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). Sánchez *et al.* (2012) continue that multiplayer games should offer optimal communication mechanisms. Voice communication is important in creating a feeling of being there with friends, allows better social interaction and creates group spirit (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012). However, when the group consists of unknown people, voice communication can mediate before mentioned disturbing behavior and destroy player's motivation.

Anti-social behaviour

In a study by Clarke & Duimering (2006), the interviewees expressed some negative aspects; cheating and various other anti-social behaviours. They considered cheating to be the most undesirable aspect of online multiplayer gaming. Cheating means using illegal third party programs, which are available for most of the popular games, and enable dishonest players to break the rules of the game, e.g. to shoot with perfect accuracy. The interviewees experienced that cheating spoiled the fun associated with human competition and created frustration by upsetting the balance of challenge in a game. The other anti-social behaviour refers for example to gamers behaving badly and verbally insulting others, which are quite usual incidents in faceless communication. It also refers to gamers using game glitches, mistakes in the game code that allow gamers to abuse certain game mechanics. (Clarke & Duimering 2006.)

2.5.4 Recognition

According to Sherry *et al.* (2006) gamers enjoy the challenge of beating friends. They continue that for many, winning the game is not enough, but one's exploits must be known amongst one's friends. Being noticed and able to show off game-playing skills seems of importance (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). Video game competition serves as a function of a dominance display among males and in establishing a relative position in the peer group's hierarchy (Sherry *et al.* 2006). Skilled players may be popular and admired similar to how it is in sports.

Frostling-Henningsson (2009) noticed in her study how a younger gamer admired an older gamer who was managing and guiding the play, and encouraging and giving advice to the younger gamer. The younger gamer then wanted to show the older gamer how he had learned. This is a trade-off where the younger gamer (less skilled) is enthusiastic about being taught by his mentor. The 'mentor' in return gets recognition of his skills. As an extreme example, the absolute best players of FPS-games can be compared to sports stars (famous, idolized).



Figure 2. Modified Counter-Strike: Global Offensive skill group promotion

2.6 Escapism

In this chapter we discuss the escapism motivation to play games. The escapism category is discussed by using subjects of immersion, fantasy, exploration and time requirements.

Escapism is only a momentary distraction from every-day and it is still relatively unknown in research what consumers get out of it (Vorderer *et al.* 2011). Therefore, it is difficult to describe what motivates players to seek these escapism experiences. People who are not gamers themselves, might not understand what it means to escape to the game world, i.e. what is the immersion of gaming. For example, parents of gamers often wonder why their children are agitated when parents interfere with gaming. These parents might not understand that this interference breaks the child's concentration. They only see a child sitting in front of a screen, not what is actually happening. It is the same when a child interrupts parents when they are fully immersed in their important work.

2.6.1 Immersion

Escapism is defined in various different ways in the literature. Escapism is often used as a synonym for immersion. Also immersion is defined in various different ways. According to IJsselsteijn *et al.* (2007), immersion is mostly described as the degree of involvement or engagement to an experience with game. Ermi and Mäyrä (2005) defined immersion in their study to consist of sensory immersion, challenge based immersion and imaginative immersion. In this study, we define the escapism category to refer to the imaginative part of the notion of escapism, i.e. imaginative immersion. Imaginative immersion refers to an imaginative world and power of storyline (Ermi & Mäyrä 2005). Therefore, sensory immersion content is under the category of entertainment motivation, and the content of challenge based immersion was placed under the achievement category.

Brown and Crains (2004) refer to a total immersion as presence. Furthermore, presence is related to flow (Ryan *et al.* 2006). Therefore, total immersion or presence means that a player is completely focused on the game and everything else is forgotten. Frostling-Henningson (2009) found in her study that online gaming provided the opportunity to get away from everyday problems, occupy their mind with something else and break from anxieties in real life. Games were seen as places of refuge (Frostling-Henningson 2009). Game designers create presence by compelling storyline, graphic environment and user-friendly controls (Ryan *et al.* 2006). Sounds and graphics create an engaging environment in games (IJsselsteijn *et al.* 2007).

2.6.2 Fantasy

Video games allow doing things that is not possible in real life (Sherry 2006) i.e. living the friendship in a way (e.g. killing each other) that is not possible in real life. Gaming provides a chance to safely and without consequences clear the air between friends by virtually killing each other, which was considered enjoyable entertainment (Frostling-Henningson 2009). Some activities that are forbidden in real life (such as killing others) are allowed in games. Frostling-Henningson (2009) observed that in virtual settings players experienced shooting someone else resulted in noticeably positive reactions, e.g. sharing a good laugh. However, there are activities that are unacceptable in both worlds, such as bullying others.

Some interviewees in the study of Frostling-Henningson (2009) showed signs of blurred reality by revealing that the virtual environment was experienced as another real world because the game was based on a real story. Online gaming becomes a hallucination of real, which is reconstituted of lived experience and without substance. One can travel mentally in a virtual world without the real life restrictions of time and space. (Frostling-Henningson 2009.) Gamers might try out new personas and lifestyles (Frostling-Henningson 2009) and feel empathy for the in-game characters (IJsselsteijn *et al.* 2007).

Cyberspaces are experienced momentarily and the game persona is sometimes perceived to be more real than roles played in real life (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). This kind of perception is again more relevant to MMORPG games. Although, the popular FPS games include some role-play elements (game character and/or avatar related matters), the role-play phenomenon is not that important part of the gaming experience. In this study, escapism is defined as escaping to a virtual world environment, which is close to a real-life simulacrum. The game sessions are relatively short, and there are breaks between the sessions. This means that when the player is in the game world, he or she is playing, i.e. operating actively. Opposed to this, in MMOPRG games players are escaping to a virtual world environment, which is completely imaginative. There is not this notion of a short game session in a way that the player would leave the game between actively doing something. Also, the doing active tasks might take up to several hours to complete. When the player is in the game world, he or she is not necessarily always completing any game related tasks, but might just hang around in the imaginative game world, socialising with others and wondering what to do next.

2.6.3 Exploration

Exploration in FPS-games refers to player's motivation to find out new things inside the game. These can be for example exploring with new tactics or finding out if it is possible to jump from a certain roof to another. Basically players might have an assumption of how something might work in the game and then test their assumption in action. It is entertaining to discover if the assumptions are correct. This is an example of that 'detailed information' often shared on Internet forums that we discussed earlier. Exploration may have different roles in different game genres. For example in MMORPG's, exploration could be seen to represent escapism.

2.6.4 Time requirements

A gamer might not be willing to devote a lot of time to gaming. For most gamers, the real life is more important than the imaginative game world. Study of Jansz & Tanis

(2007) revealed that FPS gamers devote less time to gaming than MMORPG gamers. However, some FPS gamers are so called heavy gamers who devote a lot of time to playing games, are competitive, seek challenges, are excited and enjoy doing so. (Jansz & Tanis 2007.)

A player in Frostling-Henningsson's (2009) study described how he consciously avoided playing MMORPG games because he was afraid of getting too immersed in the game. The same sense of flow (immersion) that motivates him to play FPS game is perceived as a risk in other game genre's game. The construct of control by Frostling-Henningsson (2009) refers to the player's ability to control their gaming. A player can become too immersed in the game and cannot control their gaming. This kind of addiction has been studied in the research literature (Boyle *et al.* 2011; Grüsser *et al.* 2007). The motivational landscape for different game genres is not researched enough. Also, people with different psychological tendencies might choose to play certain game genres or certain games inside the same genre. For example if a gamer considers real life to be more important, is aware of his motivation to flow/immersion/escapism and his tendency to addiction, he would unlikely choose World of Warcraft as his game. This illustrates how there is no universal and all-inclusive motivational landscape to cover all games.

For a tiny percentage of FPS-gamers, playing video games is their profession. These professional gamers can be compared to professional athletes. For them the two worlds become intertwined, because their life outside the 'active gaming session' revolves around the game as well (representing sponsors, traveling to tournaments, giving interviews etc.). Swedish television channel TV6 made a documentary series about the professional Counter-Strike team Ninjas in Pyjamas, in which they follow the everyday lives of professional gamers (TV6 2013).

2.7 Theoretical framework

In this chapter we introduce the theoretical framework of this study. The theoretical framework was built after searching the relevant literature and synthesizing the present research concerning gaming and motivations. The framework of this study gathers together and categorizes the motivational landscape of FPS-games. In addition, this is the first comprehensive framework to FPS-games in particular. Furthermore, the combination of these motivational categories with the theory of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation makes this framework unique in the context of gaming and in the literature of game research.

There are five different categories in this conceptual model: *achievement*, *learning*, *social*, *entertainment* and *escapism*. Achievement category consists of challenge, competition and rewards. Learning consists of becoming a better player and learning with awards. Social consists of social interaction, teamwork, communication and recognition. Entertainment consists of emotions & feelings, mood management, novelty, creative use and killing time. Finally, escapism consists of immersion, fantasy, exploration and time requirements.

The motivations inside different categories can be either intrinsically or extrinsically based. According to Ryan & Deci (2000) an intrinsically motivated person acts for the fun or challenge entailed rather than because of external pressures or rewards (extrinsic motivation). We used this definition of Ryan & Deci (2000) for dividing our motivational landscape into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. However, the task of dividing these motivations into the two categories was somewhat elusive. The same motivational construct can hold both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. For example, a player can be motivated to improve his gaming skills just for the fun of it or in order to win a certain competition. The theoretical framework of this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Theoretical framework of motivations to play first-person shooter games

	Achievement	Learning	Entertainment	Social	Escapism
Intrinsic Motivation	*Challenge	*Becoming a better player	*Emotions & feelings *Mood management *Creative use *Novelty	*Interaction *Teamwork *Communication	*Immersion *Fantasy *Exploration
Extrinsic Motivation	*Competition *Rewards	*Learning with Awards		*Recognition	*Time requirements

3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter consists of research methodology, the research process and data collection details. We start with an introduction of the methodological choices of this study and then move on to describing the research process. Finally we discuss the empirical data and its collection.

3.1 Methodological choices of this study

In theory development there are two major approaches, inductive as theory building and deductive as theory testing (Bonoma 1985). The difference can be viewed in terms of scientific paradigms, positivist and phenomenological, where the latter can be divided into three subcategories: critical theory, constructivism and realism (Perry 1998). The research approach in this study is inductive in the strictly sense of the theory building viewpoint. However, the research approach can also be seen as abductive, because the research process included continuous movement back and forth between the theory and the empirical material.

The scientific paradigm in this study is phenomenology. The aim of the phenomenology is to enlarge and deepen the understanding of the range of immediate experiences. It is therefore a critical reflection of conscious experience. (Goulding 1998.) This study explores video game players' motives, and tries to shed light on the complex and subjective motivational landscape that those players have and will experience with FPS-games. Therefore, the epistemological approach in this study is subjectivism. This study researches subjective experiences and conceptions. The ontological assumption in this study is social constructivism. Social constructions relevance to marketing is in helping to explain how shared understandings constitute a social consensus that shapes the perceptions and interactions of individuals that works as threads that constitute the fabric of social reality (Edvardsson *et al.* 2011). According to Berger & Luckmann (1967) all knowledge is developed, transmitted and maintained in social situations. Experiences

are, and therefore also motives to seek those experiences, in the context of this study derived from the social interaction. Hence, in ontological terms, reality can be viewed as socially constructed.

According to Bonoma's (1985) observations, some of the researchers have gone so far in their opinions that they consider qualitative research to be the only valid knowledge-accrual device on human behaviour when dealing with a complex and context-sensitive phenomenon. Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007) state, that interviews are highly efficient way to gather rich empirical data from highly episodic and infrequent phenomena. Interviews give large amounts of data on a single topic and insight of the thought process of the interviewee (Wilson 2010). The phenomenon of this research represents a highly complex psychological environment where human behaviour acts in a major role.

Eisenhardt (1989) points out that when researching the underlying dynamics of relationships, qualitative data provides a good understanding of the research question 'why'. In this research a qualitative research method offers the best possible empirical data for successfully grounding the player's motives behind their actions. However, we are unable to say the weight of each motive contributing to the overall motivation to play FPS-games. Furthermore, this study hardly grounds all of the possible motives to play. Using the qualitative data can misleadingly be seen as a synonym for qualitative research, which from different people have different understanding, and therefore the research strategy needs to be clearly clarified along with epistemological assumptions (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007).

A case study represents a research strategy (Yin 1981). The case study as a research strategy attempts to study a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin 1981). Unlike laboratory experiments that isolate the phenomena from their context, case studies emphasize the rich, real world context in which the phenomena occur (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007). A case study does not imply the use of a particular type, qualitative or quantitative, of evidence (Yin 1981). For example, the evidence may come from fieldwork, archival records, verbal reports, observations or combinations of these (Yin 1981). This study has a case study

research strategy and it contains two illustrative cases to describe the phenomenon. The summary of methodological choices of this study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of the methodological choices in this study

The aim of the study	Explore and describe the motivations to play FPS-games.
Scientific paradigm	Phenomenology
Ontology	Social constructivism
Epistemology	Subjectivism
Human conception	Complex and irrational
Method	Qualitative research
Research strategy	Case study
Research approach	Abductive

3.2 Research process and data collection

The research method of this study is qualitative and the research strategy is case study. In this chapter we describe the research process, its data collection and interviewees' profiles. The drive towards measurement of customer experience comes from those who believe that a phenomenon do not exist if it cannot be measured (Palmer 2010). Motive to play video games could be seen as desire to seek experiences. The phenomenologist has only one legitimate source of data, and that is the views and experiences of the participants themselves (Goulding 1998). Therefore, we truly need to get inside players' minds to explore this phenomenon. According to Bonoma (1985), the goal of the data collection in case research is the gaining of understanding and the depth of knowing. He continues that the risk of low data integrity is traded for the contextual richness of the findings. Also, the research

of motivation to play video games is still in its early days, and does not offer proper conceptualizations to be measured statistically. This is the case especially with motivation to play FPS-games.

Long-term direct personal experience with online gaming and FPS-games helped to understand what the interviewees' were saying. A lack of this kind of personal experience can lead to misinterpretation of the jargon that the gamers use when talking games. This jargon has been translated to English to the extent that is possible. Personal experience also helped us to understand better and find key motivations to play games between the lines. This study is a continuation of a preliminary study (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012) where we studied the FPS-gamers' experiences with digitally delivered online video game service, which clearly improved our understanding of the phenomenon concerning this study. Description of the research process is presented next.

3.2.1 Description of the research process

In this chapter we describe our research process from choosing the research topic to analysing the empirical data. We explain this by describing the ten different phases of our research process. We give detailed information about every phase of our research.

1. Preliminary study: Customer Experience of a Digitally Delivered Computer Game

Preliminary study of a customer experience in FPS-games (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012) acted as a kick-start to the mysterious world of video game research. It clearly helped in gaining better understanding of the context concerning this study. Previous study contributed to the knowledge of how customers experience an online gaming service. Major part of the resulted customer experience concept consisted of basic service elements, relationships with service providers and third parties and the social network dynamics. The psychological and motivational dimension of customer experience remained thin.

2. Discussing the research topic

Despite the preliminary study's broader focus on research problem and the used marketing theory along with the suitable social sciences contribution, we felt that the same topic could offer many more fruitful opportunities to study customer's experiential side in FPS-games. The main interest stayed on the point of searching the players' experiences, why they want to play FPS-games, and how different marketing phenomena affect to them or how those marketing phenomena can possibly be used as an approach to study what goes inside the players' minds.

3. Defining the research gap and research problem

Defining the study's research gap and problem was not straightforward process. Although we noticed immediately how the majority of the relevant events that affect to player's experience and their willingness to play a certain game, take place in the social networks, we faced reasonable challenges in forming the precise research problem. We chose to research how electronic WOM impacts on players' experiences and willingness to play a certain game. It was evident that this research problem had a clear research gap.

4. Viewing the research literature

Theoretical base was considered to be customer experience literature spiced with motivational dimensions and thereafter connected with eWOM literature. However, multiple problems arose. The research scope stayed too wide even considering the experience and motives base alone. Second and more severe problem was that existing eWOM literature could not meet the demands of this study's scope in describing what happens in the social networks (word of mouth) if the underlying impact, i.e. triggering event (Sweeney *et al.* 2008), is not derived from quality based description of the service. Those triggering events could be seen as changes or adjustments in the game service. In addition, we came to a conclusion that we know far too little of the motivations to play games, and that it may need a study of its own.

5. Changing the focus and research problem solely on describing the motivational landscape in FPS-games

Therefore we chose to re-evaluate the research problem of this study. The eWOM theory simply demanded to include too wide theory base (adding traditional service literature for triggering events) and was not easily compatible with it (service literature) when concerning the scope of the research and resources of the researchers. Motivations to play FPS-games were the whole time in the core of our interest and we still thought we know relatively little of them. Consequently, we decided to focus on that side alone and research problem shaped into describing a motivational landscape of FPS-games, i.e. what motivates people to play them. The motivational landscape comes from the players' desires and aims concerning games. We simply wanted to get free from the approach of service literature, where the customer experience is evidently structured to consist of company's performance and the relationships with customers. In addition, we longed for a real customer's point of view. In short, we did not want the literature formed from the company's perspective to shape the structure of our framework.

6. Deepening the relevant research literature

This study's theory base benefitted from the work of the preliminary study. Although we immediately found that there exist studies of the motivational side of gaming, which were not included in the preliminary work, we discovered that this topic is not widely studied. More precisely, we found that gaming was researched more from the outcomes viewpoint than from the viewpoint of motivation to play games. Secondly, theory base was relatively thin on motivations to play games. Thirdly, we argue that FPS-games are different concerning the motivation to play compared to for example MMORPG's (Massive multiplayer online role-playing games). The theory started to form around categorizing the motivational landscape of FPS-gaming. We took advantage of the gaming research concerning motivations, although, most of them were not been done in the context of this study (FPS-games). This resulted in two ways. Firstly, we were able to form categories that are suitable for other game genres too. Secondly, we had to drop some of the content out from the final framework after

the empirical analysis. In addition, we decided to divide the motivations into intrinsic and extrinsic sides.

7. Selecting the interviewees

The selection of the interviewees was based on the assumption that we gain richer data from experienced players. They have more comprehensive perspective for evaluating their willingness or motive to play FPS games. However, there were limitations. We did not find any women who played these games. We interviewed five different players, which were all Finnish men. All of the players were experienced players and combined they have over 80 years of experience with games in general. Furthermore, all interviewees were gamers who preferred the FPS-genre. Our interviewees were all so called hard-core gamers. More information about the interviewees is presented in Table 3.

8. Collecting the empirical data

Phenomenology usually deploys the depth interview as the main tool of research (Ardley 2011). Interviews give large amounts of data on a single topic and insight of the thought process of the interviewee (Wilson 2010). This study could be seen explorative in nature, which encourages researchers to search for a rich qualitative data. The empirical data was collected with semi-structured interviews over the Internet and recorded with Skype. The themes of the interview were derived from the literature review. We started the interviews with an open question and followed with questions related to the different themes. Sometimes we let the interviewees to wander off, but then directed them back to the themes. We ended the interviews with question of what is the most important motivation to play games. After the fifth interview we found that the data collection had received saturation because the interviewees started to repeat each other's answers and brought hardly any new information to the discussion. Afterwards the recordings were transcribed.

9. Including additional empirical material from previous study

We decided to research again the empirical material from the preliminary study, and decided to include some of the empirical material also in this study. The previous study, which also included the psychological side of gamers, gave us additional information to various topics concerning the motivation to play games. After all, the precise context and the criterions for selecting the interviewees remained the same. We have marked the interviewees from the previous study in table 3 that describes the interviewee profiles.

10. Analysing the empirical data and comparing it to the research literature

Next, the empirical data was analysed and the findings were compared to the existing literature. Some of the theoretical contents presented in the theoretical framework were removed from the final results. Problems with the relevance of some of the theoretical content were already discussed in the theory chapter. Although they are evidently relevant subjects in other gaming genres, they were not found to be present in this study of FPS-games. We also had to reshape the base of our theoretical constructs. For example, in the achievement chapter, instead of discussing about skills, we used abilities and Flow-balance to illustrate the notion of challenge and to better separate it from the learning category's skills (interactive and cognitive skills). Also, to be more precise, we changed the learning with rewards to learning with awards in order to distinct it from the rewards presented in the chapter of achievement.

3.2.2 Description of the interviewees

The interviewees were all Finnish males (ages 22-28). However, usually the empirical material in gaming research is collected mostly or completely from male interviewees (see e.g. Nacke & Lindley 2009; Clarke & Duimering 2006; Demetrovics *et al.* 2011; Sánchez *et al.* 2012). All of the interviewees have been heavy FPS-gamers at least in some point of their life. Now they were either students of universities, students of universities of applied sciences, or actively working. They had started to play FPS-games around the age of 12. Combined they have over 80 years of experience with FPS-games and it is safe to assume that combined they have over 20,000 hours of active playing time. Concerning the games of this study, the interviewees were either experienced players of the game, they had no experience with it or they had experience with earlier versions. The profiles of the interviewees are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Description of the interviewees

Interviewee	Age	Counter-Strike: Global Offensive	Battlefield 3	Duration of the interview
1	22	Experienced player	Experienced player	22 minutes
2	27	Experienced player	Experienced player	35 minutes
3	28	Experienced player	No experience	16 minutes
4	25	Experienced player	Experienced player	26 minutes
5	23	Experienced player	No experience	15 minutes
6	27	Earlier versions	Experienced player	73 minutes*
7	28	Earlier versions	Experienced player	26 minutes*

* Interviewees from the previous study.

4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

In this chapter we describe the context of this study, introduce the empirical material and its analysis, and present the summary of empirical results.

4.1 Context of the study

FPS-games are fast-paced and goal directed activity, i.e. shooting enemies, that takes place in complex, dynamic behavioural environments where gamers must quickly adapt to situations and respond with appropriate actions. Each person controls a single game character and experiences the game from a first-person perspective. Commonly the characters behaviour, health and survivability conform to known scientific laws – to an extent. (Clarke & Duimering 2006.)

As cases for this study, we chose two FPS games (Counter-Strike: Global Offensive and Battlefield 3) because we wanted to capture the whole motivational landscape of FPS games. For example, as experienced gamers, we already knew that Counter-Strike (2012) is much about competition and that external rewards are widely implemented in Battlefield 3 (2011), and vice versa. Therefore, choosing only one of these games would result in inadequate conclusions considering the motivations to play FPS-games. In this study Counter-Strike: Global Offensive is referred with Counter-Strike.

4.1.1 *Battlefield 3*

Battlefield 3 (2011) is a first-person shooter video game developed by EA Digital Illusions CE and published by Electronic Arts. The first Battlefield-game (Battlefield 1942) was released in 2002 and Battlefield 3 is the eleventh instalment in the Battlefield franchise. As of June 2012, the series has sold over 23 million copies (VGChartz 2012). Also here, we believe the current sales numbers to be significantly higher.



Figure 3. Battlefield 3

In Battlefield 3 two teams fight for victory in the battlefield. The game includes four different infantry classes, which all have different roles. The game also includes several land, sea and air vehicles the players can control. Several game modes are present, of which the most played are Conquest (capture and hold objectives) and Rush (one team attacks while the other defends).

Battlefield 3 was chosen because of its more casual nature and versatile gameplay. In Battlefield 3 there exists no competitive scene or professional players. The competition in Battlefield 3 is more 'relaxed' than in Counter-Strike. Versatile gameplay means that the players are given a lot of different options (maps, infantry type, weapons, modifications to weapons, vehicle type, modifications to vehicles etc.) to choose from. Providing the players with several options can add up to a fun and diverse game, but it also destroys the balance of the gameplay that is required for competitive play (like Quidditch, i.e. fantasy).

4.1.2 Counter-Strike Global Offensive

Counter-Strike is a tactical first-person shooter video game developed by Valve Corporation. The game originated from a Half-Life modification (first beta in 1999). The game has been expanded into a series since its original release. Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (2012) is the fourth and newest edition of Counter-Strike. As of August 2011, the franchise has sold over 25 units (Gamespot 2011). Valve Corporation has not released sales figures since then. We believe the current sales numbers of the series to be much higher.



Figure 4. Counter-Strike: Global offensive

In Counter-Strike a team of terrorists compete against a team of counter-terrorists in a series of rounds. Each round is won by either completing the mission objective or eliminating the opposing team. The most popular competitive game type is bomb defusal, in which the terrorists try to blow up one of the two objectives and the counter-terrorists try to prevent them. Other more casual game types include hostage rescue, deathmatch, arms race etc.

We chose Counter-Strike: Global Offensive for this study because of its highly competitive nature and gameplay. Competitive nature here refers to the existence of

Electronic Sports (professional players) and a competitive scene (ladders, tournaments, cups etc.). Competitive gameplay here refers to the simplicity of Counter-Strike in order to provide the players a highly competitive and balanced infantry only gameplay. In practice this means that there are few weapons and few maps, the movement is simple and the aiming is skill based. The amount of options the players have is limited.

4.2 Introduction to the empirical material

In this chapter we present and analyse the empirical material. In a phenomenological study interviews are scrutinized into meaning units that help to describe the central aspects of the experience, which are then synthesized to provide a general description of the overall picture (Goulding 1998). The empirical analysis is divided in themes that were formed from the literature review. We also used the secondary empirical material from our bachelor's thesis (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012) in the analysis. The interviews started with a general level questions about a pleasant gaming experiences and what motivates them to play. Then we guided the interviewees to discuss about five different motivational themes (achievement, learning, entertainment, social and escapism) of this study.

The interviewees described their pleasant gaming experiences. The answers were combinations of the contents of different motivational categories. Here is an example:

“Gaming happens at night. We often play evenings and nights. There’s three of us or more and I perform well in the game (achievement, social). It is really important that when I play, I forget everything else (escapism). I am so drawn into the game that I forget all life’s worries (escapism). It is a sacred moment dedicated for having fun (entertainment). We play well together, make crazy and creative decisions and succeed. (achievement, social)” (6, on Battlefield 3)

We continued the interviews by asking what motivates the gamers to play FPS games. The interviewees brought forward game mechanics (fast tempo), competitiveness, a social dimension and skill requirements.

“I enjoy the fast tempo of FPS games. A lot happens in a short time. And I like to shoot guns. That is what fascinates me.” (1)

“In FPS games the skill is often stands out, especially in those games that I play. Skill determines the outcome, not luck. The random variables do not play a huge role as they do in many other genres.” (4)

“Competitiveness and the fast tempo of the game are important. I don’t necessarily have to spend a lot of time in training, because I’ve played these games a lot in my youth.” (2)

“You can affect to a lot of things on your own. Also, much teamwork is required and that is what I like.” (5)

The previous question was followed by a question why interviewees choose to play a certain game of the FPS-genre.

Answers to why they choose a certain game of the FPS-genre:

“If the game is something that I like, then it is the reason to play it. If you think about Counter-Strike, you have to collaborate and communicate well. Also, you meet a lot of new people” (5, on Counter-Strike)

“There are differences in game mechanics between games. I want to play games that require for a lot of skill where you cannot merely cope with luck” (2)

“I choose a game based on skill requirements. You have to remember that there are two kinds of games. There are ‘skill based games’ that you play when you play seriously. Then there are games that are just ‘brainless shooting’, which can also be enjoyable. You can just toggle your brains off and play” (4)

“Pleasant graphics, a decent amount of competitiveness and the possibility to play as a team are reasons to play. I enjoy playing in teams.” (1)

“You get to play against other people and there is the whole scale of emotions” (4)

We have shed light on the subject on a general level, e.g. how they see a pleasant gaming session and what motivates them to play. In short, we found out what were the players’ first and conscious perceptions of their motivations to play FPS-games.

At the end of the interviews we asked the gamers what is the ultimate motivation to play games. The final question of the interview was ‘What motivates you the most to play FPS-games. All of the answers were either achievement motivation (competition) or social motivation related. Answers to what is the ultimate motivation to play FPS-games:

“Definitely competitiveness” (1)

“Desire to win” (5)

“I get to play with my friends” (3)

Next we discuss what happened between, i.e. introduce the empirical material of the five categories of motivations to play FPS-games.

4.3 Motivation: achievement

In this chapter we discuss challenge, competition and rewards.

4.3.1 Challenge

First we discuss challenge. We asked the interviewees how they were motivated by challenge in FPS-games. The notion of challenge was understood in various different ways. Unlike in single-player games in which the challenges are more easily recognizable, it seems that there is no clear understanding of the boundaries of what can be considered as a challenge in multiplayer games. This is because of the social dimension of the games and the fact that every game is always different. It is greatly up to the players themselves to define the challenges in a multiplayer game. A challenge can mean playing against a better opponent (competitive challenge). On the other hand, a challenge can mean the journey of becoming a better player, or a better team.

We started by asking the interviewees how they are motivated by challenge. Playing against better opponents was seen as a motivating challenge. Perhaps beating a better opponent brings a greater feeling of achievement and improvement. This supports the findings of Liu *et al.* (2013): if players are winning against the odds, they report higher feelings of enjoyment.

“I rather play against a better opponent because it is more challenging” (5)

We identified two kinds of teamwork related challenges. Firstly, achieving as a team, which relates to, e.g. achieving honourable victories together. Secondly, coping with team dynamics, which relates to the fact that teammates are often changing and it is a challenge to find the roles in the game and to get the team to work well together. This challenge is connected to social motivation.

“Maximising the teamwork in order to raise the ‘level’ of team performance is a challenge.” (2)

“The teamwork is a challenge. You have to learn to read the team, identify what kind of players there are and find your role in the team in relation to others. That is sometimes difficult.” (4)

Becoming a better player was seen as a challenge, i.e. improving one's skill. There also exists a worry that you might get left behind if you do not improve your abilities along with the challenges (teammates are improving, opponents are improving). This challenge is connected to motivation to learn.

“A desire to become a better player is a challenge.” (2)

“Individual skills and improving them is a challenge. It is a challenge to develop your skills so that you do not get left behind.” (4)

Ability to overcome challenges

We have now discussed challenge in general. Next we discuss the ability to overcome challenges. We asked the interviewees if it is different to overcome challenges in Battlefield 3 and Counter-Strike.

“Both Counter-Strike and Battlefield 3 require for similar skill sets.” (2)

By skill sets the interviewee meant the interactive skills required to play FPS-games such as shooting, moving etc. However, the level of ability required to play is different. This is connected to the motivation to learn.

“Battlefield 3 is a game where the difference of players with different ability level does not appear as clearly as it does in Counter-Strike. In Counter-Strike the lesser skilled players have absolutely no chance against the skilled. In Battlefield 3 they have some chance.” (2)

Games were seen differently depending on the importance assessed with the combined ability of the team, which defines the team's competitiveness. This is connected to the social motivation.

“Personally I think that Battlefield 3 is a game in which you do not necessarily have to work as a team, because teamwork and competition are not in the core of the game. In Counter-Strike the level of play is very high. Even if you would be the best, you cannot succeed in the game alone. It is a team game.” (1)

A maximal team performance was not seen to be as essential in Battlefield 3 as it was in Counter-Strike due to the casual versus competitive nature of the games. This supports the findings in our previous study (Kuoppala & Finnerman 2012).

Flow-balance

Next we discuss Flow-balance. The flow model describes how a person's state of mind changes depending on how abilities and challenges meet, and 'flow' is the ultimate state where challenge and abilities are both high and equally balanced (Csikszentmihalyi 1977). We asked the interviewees about the meaning of 'flow' as a Flow-balance in online FPS-games and if it affects to their motivation.

“If the game was evenly matched, the loss may still be meaningful. A defeat in such a game does not bother nearly as much as getting crushed by the opponent.” (1, on Counter-Strike)

“Flow-balance is very important.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

The findings of Liu *et al.* (2013) indicate that, when players compete with evenly matched opponents, they will spend more effort and play for longer durations. This is in line with our findings. It is certain that providing the players with Flow-balance is highly important. Players may be discouraged if they are crushed by their opponents.

“If the opponents are much better the motivation may diminish fast.”
(2)

Also, players may lose interest in the game when the opponent is too weak.

“If the opponent is clearly weaker I lose my interest instantly. There is no challenge.” (5)

We asked how uneven matchups may affect player’s motivation to continue playing.

“Of course it has an effect on my motivation. I have no interest in playing if I cannot play on the highest level of my abilities (if the opponent is too weak).” (2)

This interviewee revealed that he wishes to play on the highest level of his abilities, i.e. he wishes to be challenged. The players may become bored if they are not challenged enough.

4.3.2 Competition

According to Sherry *et al.* (2006) competition was one of the most common reasons for playing video games. First we discuss the competitive nature of players and games. We asked the interviewees if they considered themselves competitive in nature while playing games. All of the interviewees considered themselves competitive in nature. However, the interviewees used different adjectives to describe the extent of their competitive nature, such as ‘extremely’ or ‘somewhat’.

“I feel like I am a competitive person when I play games.” (1)

“I am an extremely competitive person.” (2)

Their competitive nature can affect their gameplay and their motivation.

“I always try to play my best to the end of the match.” (5)

“My competitiveness motivates me to play.” (2)

Holbrook *et al.* (1984) stated that emotions and performance depend on how a person's personality interacts with the nature of the game. We found that players' competitive nature may increase the players' motivation to play competitive FPS-games, help them to perform better and become better players. On the other hand, players that are highly competitive in nature may experience cons such as performance anxiety; not performing as well as the player itself or other players expected. As we noticed earlier, there exists a worry of being left behind. No competitive person enjoys being the worst player in their team. Also, a player who cannot handle disappointments may experience unwanted emotional results. This issue with controlling the mind is related to the learning requirements of gaming (learning). One interviewee recognized how his competitive nature affects him negatively.

“Because of my competitive nature, I can lose my nerves when I make mistakes and such.” (5)

Losing of nerves serves as an example how the competitive side of gaming is meaningful. Judging by their answers, Counter-Strike players could be profiled as highly competitive in nature. Answers given by Battlefield 3 players are clearly different.

“It is nice to win.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

“You get more points when you win, so it is important [ironic laughter].” (7, on Battlefield 3)

“Although this is a casual game, winning is still the point of the match. I do have competitive instinct after all.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

Liu *et al.* (2013) classify competition into direct competition, in which the competition is integral, and to indirect competition, in which the player does not directly influence on another player's performance. Counter-Strike players definitely seek direct competition. However, we cannot state that Battlefield 3 players do not. It is because the game may feel competitive to some gamers. It is a matter of perception whether the player feels the game to be competitive or not. For example, winning a casual game may be important for some gamers, while the others are there to only have fun. In our previous research we did notice that losing a game still bothered the players even though the game was casual. However, a player with experience in both Battlefield 3 and Counter-Strike had a clear view of the differences.

"In Battlefield 3, it does not matter if you win or lose. When you win in Counter-Strike, it really feels like a victory." (2)

Winning a casual game may not be that rewarding to players. The winning team is given external rewards (win points) and the losing team is also given external rewards (win points, but less). In a competitive match in Counter-Strike the winning team is rewarded (win points) and the losing team is punished (lose points). In a casual game a player can get to the 'highest level' just by playing the game, while in competitive game the player needs to win the games to get there. This leads us to the main motivational difference between the casual Battlefield 3 and the highly competitive Counter-Strike.

"Battlefield 3 to me is more about entertainment. Counter-Strike to me is more about competition." (1)

Now we have discussed the meaning of direct competition. Next we discuss the meaning of indirect competition. Extrinsically motivated players play in order to receive something positive or to avoid something negative that is separate from the activity (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012). Indirect competition may be an excellent motivator, because the player can experience feelings of success without having to go through feelings of failure. An interviewee gave an example of indirect competition and described why that indirect competition was important to him.

“Every game that has a rank or something that you can use to compare yourself to others and your friends motivates me. I have to be at least as good as my friends, preferably better.” (4)

Indirect competition often takes place outside the actual gaming session. The players can compete over rank, statistics, unlocks etc. Indirect competition is made possible via various rewards.

4.3.3 Rewards

Rewards represent extrinsic motivation (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012). We asked the interviewees if external rewards motivated them to play.

“The rank systems may impact on willingness to stay with the game.” (4)

Interviewees made comments about the social aspect of external rewards, which is connected to the social motivation (e.g. recognition).

“I’d say that friends are the biggest reason why I play some game, and I could not consider playing a game where I could not compare myself to my friends with statistics, ranks etc.” (4)

“It’s nice to know when you bypass your mates’ performance level.” (6)

The interviewees considered statistics to be a crucial part of the game. Here we found connection to the motivation to learn. External rewards support learning by offering feedback and the possibility to analyse your progress.

“You need feedback for your actions so you know where you are heading” (4)

“Statistics help you to analyse your own gameplay. ” (7, on Battlefield 3)

Counter-Strike does not have a wide range of external rewards. Therefore, we asked the interviewees’ opinions about the external reward system of Battlefield 3.

“I consider statistics to be one the best what Battlefield 3 has to offer.” (1, on Battlefield 3)

“Basically Battlefield 3 has no other objective than to improve your statistics.” (2, on Battlefield 3)

According to Liu *et al.* (2013) symbolic rewards such as status or praise alone can drive competition. This is in line with our findings. One interviewee saw external rewards to be the only objective that Battlefield 3 offers. This means that he was extrinsically motivated to play the game, i.e. not playing for its own sake. Chasing rewards was seen both positively and negatively. Unlocking new stuff was mostly seen as fun and activity that supports the gameplay. However, players can also feel that external rewards weaken their gameplay experience.

“You play more and you get to unlock stuff and ‘achievements’ etc. This supports the gaming and increases the interest in the game” (1, on Battlefield 3)

“It often does feel like a grind. If your reward is far away, it is boring.” (5, on Battlefield 3)

One interviewee was upset that skill is not part of the equation in the external rewards system. In his opinion players should be rewarded for their skill and accomplishments rather than their hours spent playing.

“The more you play the better stats you have regardless of your skills.” (2, on Battlefield 3)

He continued with a comment about how this can affect his motivation. Obviously, rewards alone, which motivate extrinsically, are insufficient to motivate all gamers.

“Such extrinsically motivated system does not motivate to play in a long-haul. When you have unlocked everything, what is there to do?” (2, on Battlefield 3)

Another interviewee had a different view. Improving statistics can be a motivation to play.

“You are never ‘ready’. When you have received all of the rewards, you can always improve your scores.” (4, on Battlefield 3)

However, merely improving statistics did not satisfy everyone.

“Your numbers keep increasing when you play. So what?” (2, on Battlefield 3)

The external rewards in Battlefield 3 did not support the competitive nature of this particular interviewee (interviewee 2). He did not find the rewards meaningful because they can be earned only by playing the game without doing (or being) anything special. We could say that this player prefers to be recognized for his skills, not for his playing time. This is connected to the social motivation (recognition).

We argue that external rewards are a way to trigger players’ motivation to play games. In casual games, often the visible and comparable statistics are built in a way that neglects the true state of the player’s results, e.g. showing only the number of player’s wins without taking into consideration the number of lost games. Therefore, the player can improve his results just by spending more time with the game. This serves as an example of how the shaping of these external rewards affect to the player’s willingness to play. External rewards may also be used to blur the

individual's perception of his or her own skills. This kind of an external rewards system does not necessarily encourage players to improve their actual skills but just tamper their statistics. On the other hand, it does not discourage players to continue playing when they are incapable of competing.

There are many different competitive modes in FPS-games. These can be, e.g. team deathmatch (frag most enemies), capture the flag (attack and defend at the same time), demolition (one team attacks while the other team defends), conquest (capture and defend objectives) etc. This question was understood too complex and we did not manage to get proper answers. Next we discuss the motivation to learn.

4.4 Motivation: learning

Earlier we asked the interviewees to describe the challenges of FPS-games. Learning skills was seen as a challenge. By learning we mean learning the skills that are required to complete a task. We asked the interviewees to describe the skills that the FPS-games require and how they are motivated by those requirements. These requirements are divided into interactive and cognitive skills. According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) interactive skill refers to the player's ability to interact effectively with the controls and carry out specific actions that represent specific events, and cognitive skill refers to the player's ability to understand, assimilate, remember and use different concepts or information.

“Both Counter-Strike and Battlefield 3 require for similar skill sets.”
(2)

4.4.1 Becoming a better player

Interactive skills described by the interviewees related to hand-eye coordination, reflexes, movement, coordination, teamwork and communication skills. Genre specific interactive skill requirements may impact on players' motivations to play or not to play certain games. For example reflexes decrease when we get older. This may lead to older players preferring to play more cognitively than interactively challenging games. For example, we argue that the games of Call of Duty series, aimed for younger generation, are interactively highly challenging games in which excellent reflexes are utmost important.

“Of course the most important skill is the hand-eye coordination when you aim.” (2)

“FPS games require for good reflexes and the ability to react fast. There are often situations where you are defending a place from a little angle and you have to be able to shoot the enemy when you see a glimpse of him.” (1)

“One challenge is learning how to move and pace your movement right. I play games with round times where you need to make the right decisions at the right moment. You cannot just run around stupid.” (1)

“The ability to work in a team is important” (5)

“Communication skills are important when you play in a group. A lot is required to achieve a good communication among the group.” (1)

Cognitive skills described by the interviewees related to ‘game sense’, perception of the whole, decision-making skills, the ability to concentrate and coordination skills. Cognitive skill requirements vary between different FPS games. In competitive games there is a requirement for a higher level of cognitive skills, i.e. ‘game sense’.

“FPS requires ‘game sense’, i.e. the ability to anticipate the actions of the opponent.” (2)

“You need perception skills so that you can ‘see’ what is happening in the other parts of the map even when you do not actually see it.” (1)

“The game lives constantly and you need to react correctly according to changing situations” (3)

“You need pretty good coordination skills” (5)

Mental toughness and controlling of the mind was also seen as an asset.

“You need concentration skills. Many players lose their game when they or a teammate make a mistake and the team loses a couple of rounds because of it. You have to bypass the mistakes in your mind and continue forward.” (4)

Games can often be lost because of a single mistake. Not because the mistake itself would have lost the game, but because of how the mistake affects mentally to the members of the team, e.g. another player may turn against their teammate and turn the whole atmosphere into negative, which then causes the team to lose. Opposite to this, a comeback from a seemingly impossible situation encourages the whole team. Controlling of the mind could be seen as enhancing or destructive to motivation.

According to Sherry *et al.* (2006) many prefer to play a familiar set of games they feel confident playing. According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) habitual players in particular genres (such as FPS-games) or previous version of a game have experience that makes assimilating new concepts and understanding the gameplay easier for them. We asked the interviewees if skill requirements of different games have an impact on playing a certain game. An interviewee described one of the reasons why he chooses to play FPS-genre.

“If you do not have time to learn a new game, then you want to have the basic skills of the game type before you play it.” (2)

“I have played FPS the most. I feel like I’m good in them. FPS are a safe choice.” (2)

Not having time to learn a new game is connected to Escapism category, where we discuss how escaping to a game world has time related issues, which vary depending on game genre. There are also skill requirement reasons why players choose to play different games within the same genre. We asked the interviewees if skill requirements affect to their motivation to play a certain game.

“Yes they affect. Counter-Strike is more skill-based game than Battlefield 3” (1)

“I’d rather choose a challenging game. I get bored with easy games.” (5)

There may also be different roles of varying skill requirements within the game.

“You can start by playing infantry, which is the easiest to play. Then you can move on to tanks, jets and helicopters.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

Sherry *et al.* (2006) noticed that many respondents enjoy playing video games to push themselves to a higher level of skill or personal accomplishment. Difficulty of multiplayer gaming may be higher or lower depending on how steep the learning curve is, relative to the player's skills (Sánchez *et al.* 2012), and relative to other players' skills. Intrinsically motivated players play because they enjoy improving their skills (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012). We asked them to describe whether it is enough to learn the basic skills required to play the game and are they motivated to become better players.

“I am motivated to become a better player. I try to learn new things and improve myself. It affects my decisions to choose to play certain games.” (3)

“I am motivated to become a better player and not just having the basic skills.” (2)

“I am motivated to learn.” (4)

An interviewee told us about his goal related to learning. The answer is clearly connected to the social category (recognition) and to achievement category (competition). Learning to become a better player for its own sake is an intrinsic motivation, but a motivation to be the best player in your team (or among friends) is an extrinsic motivation.

“I want to be the best player in my team. Being the best gives me pleasure. But if you are the best all the time, your motivation diminishes.” (2)

After reaching his goal the interviewee loses motivation unless the players around him also improve their game and challenge him for the number one spot. This way

the learning is connected to competition. We asked the interviewees to clarify whether the improving of skills is a reason to choose a certain game.

“Personally it is.” (1)

“It is one reason to play if you want to succeed in that game.” (5)

“It is in some sense, but there has to be more than that.” (2)

Opposite view illustrated how one interviewee saw improvement of skills to be merely a by-product of gaming:

*“I do not consider myself to play to improve my gaming skills. Progress in skills is more like something that happens when you play”
(4)*

4.4.2 Learning with awards

Next we asked the interviewees about learning with external awards in FPS-games. Players can learn step-by-step in a guided fashion when they need to develop a particular ability in the video game (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). External awards can be used as a tool to teach players the game.

“Unlocks definitely expands the gaming experience by teaching the weapons and other stuff gradually, and it also makes you want to play the game more” (6)

“There are so many different weapons and items etc., that you cannot learn all of them at once. Therefore it is much better to introduce the new weapons and items piece by piece.” (7, on Battlefield 3)

4.4.3 Collaborative learning

We found that learning from other players is motivating. The extent to which players are willing to learn a game differs. Some players are happy with the basic knowledge of the game while others seek out every little detail there is to know. Often the little detail information is shared on, e.g. different Internet forums. A collaborative learning situation is a motivating experience.

Next we discuss what it means to learn from other players. We asked the interviewees to clarify if learning from others has an impact on willingness to play. Answers could be divided into two categories concerning collaborative learning: passive and active. Learning from the community (passive learning) in order to push oneself to a higher skill level was seen as motivating.

“By merely playing the game, you can learn the game to a certain point. After that point is reached, you need the help from the community, which is, e.g. YouTube-videos and other stuff from forums. The learning of the game can be hugely slower without using the community for your benefit.” (4)

Collaborative learning activities can be connected to the entertainment category (creative use), and can be also entertaining and intrinsically motivating experiences.

“By watching skilled players’ game-videos from YouTube you can see amazing ways to play the game. Also you can watch how skilled teams play and cooperate together. To me this is the same as watching ice hockey from television.” (6)

The interviewees valued playing with better players and learning from them (active learning).

“I am trying to improve a little bit all the time. I try to watch and learn from the better players” (3)

“It affects. It is nice to play with skilled players who give you feedback when you make mistakes, even if sometimes the feedback comes with an aggressive tone. It improves my game and I have taken it constructively.” (1)

Collaborative learning can be seen as motivating from two viewpoints; learning from others and teaching others. The interviewees mentioned that they enjoy teaching others and see it as a source of motivation and enjoyment.

“It is nice to learn from others and I like to teach others too.” (5)

“It makes my own enjoyment with the game higher if I can teach my teammates to become better players” (2)

“It is funny to watch other players’ gaming and then tell them what they are doing wrong. It makes you feel good if you can teach your mates.” (4)

4.5 Motivation: entertainment

Entertainment products try to answer to people's desire to seek entertaining and enjoying experiences. However, entertainment as a source of motivation contains also other characteristics than just feelings and emotions. First we asked the interviewees to describe gaming as a form of entertainment and how it may differentiate from other entertainment, e.g. sport, movies etc. The interviewees found interactivity to be the main difference between gaming and watching movies. The results of our study suggest that gaming seems to have a lot of similarities with competitive sports. That is perhaps the reason why professional gaming is called Electronic Sports. Gaming is a social entertainment that is challenging and varying, and requires for continuous reasoning which can be very wearing. Traditional entertainment may seem monotonous to gamers. However, gaming can also be brainless time killing activity.

“Gaming is interactive entertainment. It keeps the consumer active and it requires a lot more concentration than e.g. movies.” (2)

“I see gaming as a two-fold entertainment. Gaming is a very social entertainment like sports with friends. On the other hand it can sometimes be completely brainless shooting, sort of like watching a stupid movie with your brains toggled off.” (4)

“Gaming offers always new challenges. I consider movies to be a bit too monotonous entertainment for my taste.” (5)

“You need to think and do more. It is continuous reasoning what to do next. It is very wearing form of entertainment and at some point it can be very tough when having a long gaming session. (1)

“You do not get that kind of pleasure from the movies. You do not get the ‘I just completely crushed nine opponents’ type of feeling (feeling of accomplishment). (4)

“Battlefield 3 is less competitive game than Counter-Strike but it offers a great chance to kill time.” (2)

4.5.1 Feelings

In their studies Vorderer *et al.* (2011) used a construct of *mood management* and Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) used *recreation* to describe this notion of intentionally seeking to change one's emotions. We asked the interviewees whether they see gaming as a way to manage their emotions and moods. Playing FPS-games is an active entertainment which requires concentration. As one interviewee commented, FPS-games are not well suited entertainment to be consumed when you are in a bad mood or tired.

“It is perhaps possible to some extent. However, if I have work related stress, I usually do not have the energy to play. I need a positive feeling when I play. If I do not feel positive, I cannot perform, and therefore do not even bother to try.” (2)

Intrinsically motivated gamers play because they like the suspense and thrill (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012; Vorderer *et al.* 2011). Arousal as a negative emotion may turn into positive emotion such as *euphoria* and *relief*, which explains why entertainment users are willing to suffer from some rather unpleasant emotions (Vorderer *et al.* 2011). We asked the interviewees to describe the feelings they experience while playing games. Many of interviewees described the emotional rollercoaster ride that happens while playing. Also, they described the various different forms of extreme emotions they experience while playing.

“I still get, as a 27-year-old guy, a huge outburst of feelings when everything is not going well in my game session.” (2)

“I feel stressed sometimes when I play and face difficult situations. When I watch other people playing (when I'm already out of the

game) I feel tension. Sometimes I feel unconsciousness and a sense of hopelessness when teammates are getting killed and nobody informs where the enemies are.” (1)

“It creates a sense of pressure when you’re the last man standing of your team.” (3)

In the previous question we asked the interviewees to describe feelings they experience while playing. Next we gave them examples of gaming situations and asked them to describe the feelings they might have experienced in these situations. A single event in a game may cause an outburst of feelings. These examples possibly helped the interviewees to go back in time to the gaming situations and memorize the feelings they experienced. We see that FPS-games clearly respond to the key emotions suspense and sense of achievement by Vorderer *et al.* (2011).

“When playing one-on-one in a game deciding round in Counter-Strike, adrenaline starts to flow and my heart starts beating faster. When you win it, you feel drowsy and calm... you have accomplished something for your team.” (2)

“Succeeding in a game session brings to me extreme satisfaction. Losing, playing badly or having irritating opponents/teammates can cause extreme outbursts of hatred.” (2)

“If you’re the last man alive against multiple enemies and still manage to win the round, you get a really nice feeling of accomplishment. I get a same kind of adrenaline rush that some people get by jumping off airplanes with a parachute.” (5)

We asked the interviewees to describe how it feels like to experience the Flow-state while playing. According to Särkelä *et al.* (2009) flow leads to better results.

“When I’m in a state of ‘flow’, it feels like I can foresee much better where other opponents are and I can act much faster” (1)

Players had described in earlier answers how they experienced adrenaline rush and increased beating of heart. Now we asked precisely about physical reactions they might experience. Frostling-Henningson (2009) noticed in her observation study that FPS gamers had *physical reactions* (sighted, cried out loud, changed position in chair or interrupted the game) every time that they got shot.

“Yes, you can frighten and cringe when face something surprising in a game” (5)

“When I was younger, I might have battered my monitor.” (3)

Then it was natural to ask directly how these emotions affect to their willingness to play a certain game. Some players may see strong emotional experiences as one of the reasons they play FPS games. Likewise, some gamers might avoid playing these games because of this very same reason.

“I see strong feelings as a reason why I play, and I see them as a positive thing.” (2)

The interviewees described how feelings affect to their willingness to continue the active gaming session and whether they are motivated to start the next game.

“If you get in the state of ‘flow’ and the game ends, you immediately want to start a new one. (1)

“Losing in a very important match usually decreases willingness to play any time in the near future, and winning usually increases willingness to play again very soon” (4)

“If I fail to perform and get killed too often, I get frustrated and do not want to play more than 15 minutes.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

4.5.2 Creative use

Now we have discussed emotions as a source of entertainment. Next we asked about the creative use of games as an entertainment, i.e. unusual way of playing, which is not how the game is ‘meant’ to be played. In the theory chapter we wrote about the two girls in Frostling-Henningson’s (2009) study who played Counter-Strike, but did not want to kill each other. Another example can be Battlefield 3 players trying to climb a tree with a tank and making a YouTube video of it. This kind of activity may be hurtful for the other players in the active gaming situation (reserve one of the valuable tanks for their personal purpose), but if it makes for a fun video, and may then have an entertainment value to others.

“I have never done anything like that. Although it is nice to watch from YouTube-videos what other people have figured out or done something really funny.” (2)

“I do not see it necessary. However, I do agree that the ‘creative use’ has its own entertainment value, but you should not mix it with the normal gameplay” (1)

4.5.3 Novelty

Next we discuss novelty. Myers (1990) found that gaming answers to the seeking of novelty (curiosity). Providing the gamers with new content to explore is most typical to MMORPG games. World of Warcraft was one of the first games that successfully used novelty to keep players motivated.

“It affects and novelty can last for quite a long time if the game keeps developing. With World of Warcraft (MMORPG) the novelty lasted for months.” (4)

Since, the approach has become popular in other game genres as well. In practice, in MMORPG games this meant providing the players with new worlds, new dungeons,

new areas etc. to explore. Unlike in MMORPG's novelty is not inbuilt in FPS-games. In FPS-games this translates to updating the game versions and providing the players with new content. We asked if the novelty of a game has an effect on willingness to play a certain game.

"It affects. A new game or new sequels for old game attracts me and makes me buy it." (1)

"Novelty fades away quickly if the game itself does not impress me." (2)

Novelty can be motivating, but it seems that gamers may appreciate more of the same rather than something entirely new. Therefore, preserving the core of the game may be important.

"Counter-Strike is old and has old-fashioned game mechanics, but still remains one of the most popular online games." (2)

4.6 Motivation: social

Today, majority of new games implement social features and most games are defined as ‘social’. But what does a social game actually mean? It can mean anything. If there is at least one social interaction within a game or the game’s interface, the game may be called social, even though in reality there is not much direct social interaction.

“They say that online games are (socially) interactive. This is not necessarily always true. However, in the case of Battlefield 3, it is true.” (6)

4.6.1 Social interaction

According to Sánchez *et al.* (2012) in an online multiplayer team game the objectives and the responsibility for working towards them are shared, and so is winning (Frostling-Henningsson 2009).

“Playing together as a team to achieve common purposes is the reason I play it.” (6, on Battlefield 3)

Sherry *et al.* (2006) see social interaction to be the main reason why many individuals got involved in playing video games in the first place. We asked the interviewees if social interaction in games affect to their willingness to play a certain game. We found that social interaction is one of the main reasons why gamers choose to play multiplayer games. The interviewees enjoyed playing with their real life or online friends. Gaming is a social hobby that connects people. Killing enemies together motivates gamers and it provides gamers with a sense of togetherness through teamwork (Frostling-Henningsson 2009).

“To me it is sort of like a social interaction and joining together behind the same mission” (2)

“I belong to a clan that consists of my friends. We do not play any matches, but rather seek for a sense of cohesion.” (6)

“You can play with friends living in different parts of Finland and abroad. Gaming connects us.” (3)

Some of the interviewees also enjoyed playing with strangers and meeting new people.

“I like playing with new people. You can always find new gaming groups and new people to play with.” (1)

Interacting with a gaming group can promote new social relationships (Sánchez *et al.* 2012). Our interviewees had found new friends via gaming.

“If met one Dutch guy through gaming and actually visited him. It is nice to get to know new people.” (5)

One interviewee revealed that he always played FPS-games with his real life friends. However, there were other game genres that he enjoyed playing alone, such as action-adventure and strategy. Friends play a huge role in selecting what games to play (and not to play).

“I started because of my friends played the game. Friends influence me a lot. I am there all the time playing with my friends” (6)

“My friends started playing Battlefield 3 following me.” (7)

“The social ‘hook’ is quite deep in this game. If my friends would not play, I would not play so much.” (7, on Battlefield 3)

Group members can encourage and motivate themselves and each other to overcome collective challenges (Sánchez *et al.* 2012).

“When you play with your friends you can bring forth your own thoughts, make sure that your teammates execute the tasks they are supposed to and also receive advice what to do.” (6)

Playing with friends makes it easier to share your thoughts, give and receive advice.

“The real life friends give more feedback.” (3)

Playing with friends may strengthen real life friendships. Gamers talk about games with other gamer friends in real life environment.

“We can afterwards share laughs and talk about past game experiences.” (6)

“It is most enjoyable to play with real life friends because then you can talk about gaming stuff when you meet.” (4)

We asked the interviewees to be more specific about the differences between playing with real life friends and online friends. According to Frostling-Henningsson (2009) virtual worlds replace the real with a simulacrum, which allows gamers to evaluate other gamers on personal qualities and gaming style rather than on physical appearance. This is in line with our results.

“It is more enjoyable with friends, but it makes no difference whether those are real life or virtual friends. I have got real life friends from those virtual life friends.” (2)

“The gaming experience is no different whether you play with your real life friends or virtual friends.” (1)

“The virtual friendships may turn into real life friendships. However, we have to remember that these are two different worlds.” (3)

4.6.2 Teamwork

The respondents of the study by Frostling-Henningsson (2009) saw the ability to work in a team to be crucial. The interviewees of this study saw it the same way. Collaboration can be interpreted as a way of connection to people as ‘brothers in blood’. (Frostling-Henningsson 2009.) We asked the interviewees to describe how teamwork and collaboration affect to their willingness to play a certain game.

“Maximising the teamwork in order to raise the ‘level’ of team performance (in order to win tougher opponents) is a challenge.” (2)

“It is one of the biggest reasons I play FPS games such as Counter-Strike. You have to be a part of a team and there is a lot of communication. I enjoy it.” (5)

“It is much more enjoyable to Battlefield 3 when the team-play works, when people help each other and play as a team instead of playing as individuals. Half of the game experience is wasted unless people work as a team.” (4, on Battlefield 3)

“The more teamwork you have, the better. It is especially motivating if the teamwork is successful. The game requires for teamwork and if it fails, my motivation can disappear.” (2)

Players must understand that they are a part of a group and that the success of the group depends on achieving shared objectives. Players need to be aware of their role in the group’s success and identify with it (Sánchez *et al.* 2012.) An interviewee told us about desirable characteristics in a teammate.

“It is much more gratifying to play in a group that plays as a team. Personally I think that the people in the group do not have to be the most accurate shooters. I value them greatly if they listen to what the in-game leader says and carry out the tasks for the good of the team, in spite of possibly sacrificing themselves in doing so. Those are the

characteristics that I value in a teammate over e.g. an accurate shooter who never does what he is told etc. (1, on Counter-Strike)

Pulling together is valued and individualistic behaviour is frowned upon. It is a problem when teammates think about the game differently and do not work well together.

“It greatly pisses me off if the play styles of the teammates are not compatible.” (7)

“It is not about going solo, it is about team-play.” (6)

Gamers may try to affect to their teammates behaviour by:

“You can inspire others with your own activity. You can get others to follow your lead.” (6)

4.6.3 Communication

We asked the interviewees about the role of communication. The interviewees understood communication in two different ways. On one hand voice communication can be pleasant chatting and it creates group spirit.

“Communicating via Skype offers a whole new dimension to the experience. Friendly and pleasant chatting makes you enjoy the game more.” (4)

“Communication with friends creates a sense of being there with friends. It creates a group spirit.” (6)

On the other hand communication can be highly game task related information. Communication is an integral part of playing multiplayer FPS games. Lack of successful communication can also be a game changer.

“Communication is in a big role and you cannot compete well without a proper team communication.”(5)

“Communication is extremely important and it needs to be accurate and flawless. Things go bad if you get wrong information during the game.” (2)

When players of the same team think alike, i.e. they have the same idea of what to do next, the need for instructional communication may decrease.

“The need for communication decreases when ‘game sense’ of the players in the same team increases. “ (1)

Anti-social

Anti-social behaviour was seen very negatively. It can destroy the point in playing and eventually player’s motivation to continue playing the game. Anti-social behaviour can be e.g. cheating, griefing (hurting your own team) and verbal abuse (calling names). Clarke & Duimering (2006) found that gamers experienced cheating to spoil the fun associated with human competition and created frustration by upsetting the balance of challenge in a game.

“If there is a cheater, there is no point in playing. I know that I cannot win, the challenge disappears and I no longer care about the outcome.” (1)

“I do not want to play with teenagers who behave badly.” (6)

The other anti-social behaviour refers to for example to gamers behaving badly and verbally insulting others, which are quite usual incidents in faceless communication (Clarke & Duimering 2006).

“Misuse of in-game chats may cause negative feelings towards the game and I consider it as a motivation killer.” (4)

“Anti-social behaviour like cheating is a total motivation killer.” (2)

We found nothing new to the subject. It is already known self-evident that anti-social behaviour may destroy motivation of the participants in any activity.

4.6.4 Recognition

Admiration and recognition from other players represent extrinsically motivated individuals (Lafrenière *et al.* 2012). Being noticed and able to show off game-playing skills seems of importance (Frostling-Henningsson 2009). Getting recognition from other players and feeling a sense of power was seen to be a source of great satisfaction. Others admirations can be seen as a testimony of one's skills. One interviewee described this “top dog” type of feeling. This was stated to be a motivation to play the game.

“It is nice to get recognition of your skills. It gives you sort of top dog feeling and it motivates you to try harder and maintain your level of performance. It is nicer to be some sort of hero than nobody.” (2)

Recognition happens both in individual and group level. Players may enjoy these feelings although the players themselves would not be the best of their team, as long as they belong to the successful team.

“We join the server under the same name-tags, people recognize us and say ‘wow those guys are good’” (6)

“We were invincible and dominated our opponents. I received great satisfaction when people called us cheaters etc.” (7)

4.7 Motivation: escapism

Escapism is only a momentary distraction from every-day and it is still relatively unknown in research what consumers get out of it (Vorderer *et al.* 2011). We tried to understand how these interviewed players saw their intertwined experience of the game world and reality. Furthermore, we wanted to find out how this affects to their motivation to play certain games.

4.7.1 Immersion

We asked the interviewees if FPS-games offer a chance to escape from everyday life issues relating to for example to work or school. Answers were in line with Frostling-Henningson's (2009) notion of a place of refuge.

"It is a good way to forget everything else because it requires so much thinking that you have absolutely no time to think for example your shopping list." (4)

"If I keep small break from the school stuff, it is good to play for a while, but I do not consider it to be an escape from the reality. It just offers something else to think for a while." (1)

"If you play for many hours in a day, you easily forget to, e.g. empty a dish-machine." (3)

Then we continued by asking the interviewees if this affects to their motivation to play.

"It affects. It is a good escape." (4)

"Of course it affects. Basically it is a different world, which hooks you easily." (3)

4.7.2 Fantasy

Some interviewees in the study of Frostling-Henningson (2009) showed signs of blurred reality by revealing that the virtual environment was experienced as another “real” world because the game was based on a real story. We wanted to know how the gamers perceived the realism of the game world in FPS-games. The gamers clearly saw FPS-games to be some sort of an extension of the real world.

“In FPS-games I feel like I’m really doing something real, it is closer to reality.” (1)

“It has a real world environment to some extent.” (3)

Battlefield 3 offered a different kind of ‘realism’ than Counter-Strike.

“Battlefield 3 is technically amazing and it offers more of the sense of real warfare than Counter-Strike” (2)

The then continued asking whether this realism has an impact on their willingness to play a certain game. FPS players seem to prefer semi-realism over a fully imaginative gaming experience.

“It does. It is more enjoyable to play a game that is realistic even to some extent, e.g. no superpowers and unrealistic weapons etc. (1)

“Well yes. A semi-realistic game environment has always been my thing.” (2)

“I rather play realistic FPS-games” (5)

Some opposite thoughts too:

“I don’t see it so important whether the game has toy graphics or realistic graphics. I do not want to play a game that is completely like

real world. A total realism and a real world environment are not 'cool' in games" (4)

MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game) represents an extreme example of fully imaginative game world. We asked the interviewees if they were interested in these kinds of games. These interviewees were clearly not motivated to play games where you escape to imaginary world to live a second life.

"I have never been interested playing in fantasy worlds." (2)

"For me it requires a really good game if it is a fantasy world game." (5)

"I'm not interested in role-play games. It gets too unreal, when there is no connection to real life. (1)

Frostling-Henningson (2009) found that gaming provides a chance to safely and without consequences clear the air between friends by virtually killing each other. However, in our study we found that the interviewees (FPS-gamers) rather played on the same side with their friends than against each other.

As we said earlier, the gamers clearly saw FPS-games to be some sort of an extension of the real world. However, some of the actions taken inside the game are not appropriate in real life environments, e.g. shooting an opponent. Gamers tend to divide actions taken in imaginative environment into two different categories. Some actions are appropriate in the imaginative world (e.g. shooting people), and some actions stay inappropriate also in the imaginative world (cheating, griefing etc.). Therefore, FPS-games share similarities with sports, where actions taken inside the sports arena are possibly not fully acceptable outside of it (e.g. boxing). Next we asked the interviewees how it feels to shoot people online. The interviewees clearly saw this to be something that is acceptable in gaming, but not in real life.

“It is nice to win and humiliate opponents, but it is not real violence. Violence in reality is not a good thing. It is a game in the Internet, it is not real. It is a completely different thing.” (2)

These kinds of actions are acceptable within the rules of the game. As we discussed earlier, anti-social behaviour is a total motivation killer and not acceptable. In boxing you are supposed to hit your opponent. Kicking the opponent would be unacceptable and anti-social behaviour, which may lead to repercussions (e.g. revoking of license). Likewise in FPS games you are supposed to shoot the enemy. Shooting teammates is unacceptable and anti-social behaviour, which may lead to repercussions (e.g. ban).

4.7.3 Exploration

We asked the interviewees about exploration in multiplayer FPS-games. Exploration is not a core motivation in FPS genre like it is in e.g. MMORPG genre. The exploration was understood as learning to play new maps, making new tactics, finding out new ways to play a situation etc. In practise, exploration in FPS-games seems to be a way to learn about the game and is driven by some other motivation such as becoming a better player, teamwork, competition and recognition.

“By exploring new tactics etc. you are able to win more matches and get more recognition.” (2)

By exploring new tactics the players can improve their own abilities and the abilities of their team. It is a way to more victories and recognition.

4.7.4 Time requirements

The study of Jansz & Tanis (2007) revealed that FPS gamers devote less time to gaming than MMORPG gamers. Players evaluate how much time they have to devote into a certain game. FPS-gamers tend to represent a momentary distraction of everyday life. On the other hand, as said before, MMORPG games are more like having a second life. We asked the interviewees if time requirements affects to their

willingness to play a certain game. Answers were in line with the results of the study by Jansz & Tanis (2007).

“I have played MMORPG’s. The time needed to play those is huge. Those games require continuous playing.” (2)

“FPS-games offer a quick chance to play and leave when it suits to you.” (1)

There were several reasons why the interviewees did not want to play games that require for a lot of time. The interviewees did not want to spend thousands of hours in order to become good. In FPS games the gamers can take long breaks from gaming. The interviewees wanted to be competitive without investing a huge amount of time.

“I would not play a game that I know to require thousands of hours to become good in it, and hours to get something done in it.” (1)

“With FPS-games a casual player like me can easily take long breaks, even weeks, from playing.” (2)

“I want to be competitive without investing a huge amount of time.” (4)

The interviewees stated that their gaming may not interfere with real life.

“Now when I’m working I cannot play games that require for a lot time.”(5)

“I choose games such as FPS-games, because they fit better to my schedule. Playing too much would easily impact negatively to my real life’s social connections.” (5)

*“Something that requires my attention may always turn up in real life.
Therefore I feel uncomfortable starting a long game session.” (4)*

Now we have discussed all five motivation categories. Next we introduce the summary of the results and present conceptual model of the motivations to play.

4.8 Summary of empirical results

In this chapter we present the summary of empirical results and the empirically grounded framework of this study. The five motivational categories are achievement, learning, social, entertainment and escapism. After the empirical analysis the theoretical framework changed. Mood management was left out, because we did not find it to be a motivation to play FPS-games. Also, we added collaborative learning. Another way that it has changed is in terms of its content. We have described how these different conceptual sources of motivations actually motivate to play. Next we present the categories of the motivational landscape of FPS-games (Table 4).

Table 4. The motivational landscape of first-person shooter games

	ACHIEVEMENT	LEARNING	ENTERTAINMENT	SOCIAL	ESCAPISM
INTRINSIC MOTIVATION	<p>Challenge</p> <p>How players perceive the challenges of the game...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ability to overcome challenges and playing on the highest level of abilities <p><u>Flow-balance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enough challenge - Ability of the player and the challenge of the game meet <p><u>Learning related challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The journey of becoming a better player <p><u>Teamwork related challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximising teamwork - Achieving as a team - Coping with team dynamics 	<p>Becoming a better player</p> <p><u>Interactive skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand-eye coordination - Good reflexes - Movement and pacing - Decision-making and timing - The ability to work in a team - Communication skills <p><u>Cognitive skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Game sense - Making plays - Reacting to changing situations - Perception skills - Coordination skills <p><u>Controlling of the mind</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concentration skills - Bypassing mistakes in your mind <p><u>Skill requirements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playing the games you already know (no time to learn new games) <p>Collaborative learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive learning (watching others play) - Active learning (playing against and with better players) - Learning from others - Teaching others 	<p>How players described gaming as entertainment...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active involvement - Continuous reasoning - Not monotonous - Requires concentration - Wearing - Challenging - Social entertainment - Chance to kill time <p>Emotions & feelings</p> <p><u>Feelings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outburst of feelings - Extreme satisfaction - Extreme outburst of hatred - Stress - Tension - Unconsciousness - Hopelessness - Sense of pressure - Feeling of accomplishment - Flow (foresee situations) <p><u>Physical reactions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adrenaline flow - Adrenaline rush - Elevated heart rate - Drowsiness and calmness - Frightening and cringing - Battering monitor <p>Creative use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entertainment value (passive entertainment of watching gameplay videos) <p>Novelty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New content (updates and sequels) 	<p>Social interaction</p> <p><u>Playing with friends</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen real life friendships - Improve the cohesion of the group - Solve problems collectively <p><u>Promote new social relationships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting new people - Evaluating other gamers on personal qualities and gaming style rather than on physical appearance <p>Teamwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sense of togetherness through teamwork - Connecting people as 'brothers in blood'. - Group members encourage and motivate - Shared objectives - Shared responsibility - Shared results - Success in teamwork - Inspiration from others - Pulling together <p>Communication</p> <p><u>Pleasant chatting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creates group spirit - Strengthen friendships <p><u>Game task related</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affects to teamwork 	<p>Escaping the real world...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Something else to think - Sense of doing something real in virtual environment <p>Immersion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forget everything else <p>Fantasy</p> <p><u>Environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FPS-gamers prefer semi-realistic environment - Sense of real warfare <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some actions (e.g. violence) are understood to happen only in this environment <p>Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding out new ways to play
EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION	<p>Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competitive nature (desire to compete) - Direct competition (i.e. beating the opponent) - Indirect competition (i.e. competing with rewards) <p>Rewards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback & analysing progress (blur the individual's perception of their own skills) - Gaining rank & improving statistics (progression, success) - Chasing rewards (collecting) - Base of rewards (skill vs. time spent or something else?) 	<p>Learning with awards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gradual learning - Getting the award (medal, trophy, new weapon etc.) 		<p>Recognition</p> <p><u>Individual level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognition from other players - Showing off game-playing skills - Feeling a sense of power - Top dog type of feeling <p><u>Group level</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belonging to a good team 	<p>Time requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Play and leave as you like - Desire to be competitive without investing a huge amount of time

Achievement

The first category is achievement. The main content of this category include: challenge, competition and rewards.

It is greatly up to the gamer to define the *challenge* in multiplayer games. Challenges such as playing against a better opponent are motivating. Challenge itself is an intrinsic motivation. The games have to provide enough challenge to motivate the players. Flow-balance was seen to be a vital element underpinning the player's motivation. The players wish to play on the highest level where both abilities and challenge are balanced. Challenge can be seen as a journey of becoming a better player. Teamwork related challenges are maximising teamwork, achieving as a team and coping with team dynamics.

Competition is an extrinsic motivation. The competitive nature of gamers can increase motivation to play more and improve one's skills compared to other players. It can also lead to unwanted emotional results such as losing of nerves. Meaningfulness of the competition is a matter of perception. The amount of direct competition varies among FPS games and the players have different views of its importance. Also, the meaning of victory is different in different games. In some games a victory is 'something nice to experience' while in some games (more competitive) victory is highly satisfying. Indirect competition happens outside the core game play. Adding elements of indirect competition in a game can increase the perception of competition without the negative sides of competition. Indirect competition was seen to enhance the willingness to stay with the game.

Rewards represent a group of motivations under the extrinsic motivation. Rewards are a way to give feedback and help in analysing the progress. However, they blur the individual's perception of their own 'true' skills. Rewards are the vehicle that enables the indirect competition, which can be an important source of motivation. Gaining rank and improving statistics motivate players. However, a game that relies merely on extrinsically motivating rewards is not meaningful enough for all gamers. Also, the base of rewards may affect to the motivation of players, i.e. are the player rewarded for their skills or their time spent playing. Chasing rewards (collecting) was

seen both positively and negatively; it is fun but it can weaken the gameplay experience if the reward is too far away.

Learning

The second category is learning. The main content of this category include: becoming a better player, learning with awards and collaborative learning.

Becoming a better player means improving interactive and cognitive skills. Interactive skill was identified to consist of hand-eye coordination, good reflexes, movement and pacing, decision-making and timing, the ability to work in a team and communication skills. Cognitive skills described by the interviewees related to game sense, making plays, reacting to changing situations, perception skills and coordination skills. Controlling of the mind was also seen as an asset. Concentration skills and the ability to bypass mistakes in your mind are important. Game specific interactive skill requirements may impact on players' motivation to choose a game. That is why gamers prefer to play games they already know if they do not have the time to learn a new game. Learning to play is an intrinsic motivation if the gamer learns for the fun of it. It is an extrinsic motivation if the gamer has an extrinsic goal, such as being the best among friends.

Collaborative learning was divided into passive and active learning. Active learning happens in active game play and the passive learning happens in the gaming community, e.g. via YouTube-videos etc. Players clearly valued the learning from better players. In addition, collaborative learning contains also the aspect of teaching others and it was seen as a motivating activity. Collaborative learning was seen highly motivating to both receivers and givers. Similarly to becoming a better player, collaborative learning can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivating for the same reasons, i.e. learning for its own sake or because of a goal.

Learning with awards is extrinsically motivating. External rewards are tools that can be used to teach players the game. Gradual learning is motivating. Getting awarded for completing a task can be seen as recognition of advancement.

Entertainment

The third category is entertainment. The main content of this category include: emotions & feelings, creative use and novelty. Gaming was described to be an active form of entertainment, which requires concentration and continuous reasoning. Gamers do not see gaming as a monotonous form of entertainment. It is challenging and wearing social entertainment. However, gaming can also be an entertainment, which is consumed with brains toggled off. Gaming also offers a chance to kill time.

Emotions & feelings are intrinsically motivating. Strong feelings are a motivation to play FPS-games. Gamers experience outbursts of different feelings. They can experience extreme satisfaction and extreme outbursts of hatred. Sense of pressure, stress, tension, hopelessness and unconsciousness are all common feelings related to gaming. These negative feelings may lead to enjoyment. Feelings of accomplishments and the feeling of flow, i.e. playing well and foreseeing what is happening, are extremely motivating. Physical reactions are extensions of the feelings experienced. These include, e.g. adrenaline flow & adrenaline rush, elevated heart rate, frightening, cringing, feeling drowsy and calm, or battering the monitor.

Creative use for the fun of it is intrinsically motivating. The interviewees did not express interest to use games in a creative way and producing the content (videos) that illustrate the creative use. However, they saw it entertaining to watch gameplay videos made by others. Creative use can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivating. It is an extrinsic motivation when the gamer does this for external reasons, such as getting viewers in YouTube.

Novelty is an intrinsic motivation. Unlike in MMORPG's, novelty aspect is not inbuilt in FPS-games. Players expressed the meaning of novelty to consist mainly the updating of current game versions and providing new content.

Social

The fourth category is social. The main content of this category include: social interaction, teamwork, communication and recognition.

Social interaction was seen to be an important aspect of FPS-gaming. Gaming offers a chance to join together behind the same mission, solve problems collectively and

improve the cohesion of the group. Gaming offers a chance to strengthen real life friendships and promote new social relationships. In addition, gaming was seen to have an impact on how players choose games they play.

Teamwork is about achieving shared objectives, is enjoyable and intrinsically motivating. Sense of togetherness derives from teamwork. Teamwork in FPS-games could be seen as connecting gamers as ‘brothers in blood’. The objectives, responsibilities and results are shared. Group members can encourage and motivate each other. Gamers have to find their role in the group’s success and identify with it. Incompatible personalities are a problem and individualistic behaviour is irritating to others. Pulling together is essential. Teammates who sacrifice themselves for the good of the team are valued and can inspire others. Successful teamwork is a motivation to play.

Communication is intrinsically motivating. Communication is integral part of the FPS-games. It happens in two different levels. It can be pleasant chatting and having fun, or it can be game task related. Pleasant chatting strengthens group spirit and friendships. Game task related communication is vital to successful teamwork.

Recognition from other players is an extrinsic motivation. Recognition exists in two different levels: individual and group. Individual recognition is not necessarily meaningful to all gamers, but may be very important for some. Player can show off game-playing skills and feel a sense of power, e.g. top dog feeling or being a hero. This was seen as a motivation to play. Belonging to a good team can be enough to generate a sense of recognition. Recognition was seen as a source of great satisfaction.

Escapism

The fifth category is escapism. Escapism from everyday life was seen as a motivation to play. Escapism was a way to escape from everyday life and get something else to think. However, it was not seen as an escape to a fantasy world (MMORPG), but more like in another realistic environment where they can perform meaningful activities with real life friends and with friends from the game community. In addition, they expressed doing something real but in virtual environment.

Games could be seen as places of refuge, where the fantasy element is created by an imaginary environment with imaginary activities, i.e. shooting people. Semi-realistic environment was appreciated by FPS-gamers. They expressed the game to provide a sense of real warfare. FPS-gamers are motivated to gain a momentary distraction of everyday life, whereas MMORPG-players seek a second life.

In terms of *immersion*, playing FPS-games makes gamers forget everything else for a while. However, they do not intentionally seek strong immersion levels that negatively influence everyday life. Furthermore, they expressed no evidence of the hallucination of real.

Exploration in FPS-games is about finding out new ways to play and can lead to better performance. Exploration in general is more relevant in other game genres where there exists a strong storyline.

Time requirements are an extrinsic motivation. FPS-games offer a quick chance to play and leave as you like. The games offer a momentary distraction to everyday life. Time requirements are restricting to gaming in general and are a reason to choose FPS-games over, e.g. MMORPG. In FPS-games it is possible to be competitive without investing a huge amount of time.

5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter we discuss the connectedness of the motivational categories and motivational killers.

5.1 Connectedness of the categories

Next we present a brief discussion of the connections found between different motivational categories created in this study. These connections are divided into connections of intrinsic motivations, connections of extrinsic motivations and the contingency of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

5.1.1 Connections of intrinsic motivations

Intrinsic motivations can be connected to another category of motivations within an intrinsic motivation side of the concept. For example, becoming a better player was seen as a challenge. Also, there were two teamwork related challenges: achieving as a team and coping with team dynamics. Flow exists in three different categories. In achievement it is Flow-balance, in entertainment it is a feeling and in escapism it is related to immersion. Flow-balance is also connected to learning via becoming a better player to meet the challenges in the game. Becoming a better player can mean improving teamwork skills while collaborative learning could be seen as a part of social interaction. Creative use is connected to challenge when the users themselves come up with new challenges, e.g. driving the tank to the roof of a building. Creative use is also connected to collaborative learning, e.g. making videos that teach other players the game. Exploration is a way to learn about the game and is therefore connected to becoming a better player. It is also connected to teamwork via exploring new tactics is for the team.

5.1.2 Connections of extrinsic motivations

Extrinsic motivations can be connected to another category of motivations within an extrinsic motivation side of the concept. Both competition and rewards are source of recognition. Learning with awards can be seen similar to chasing rewards. The players can also indirectly compete via these awards.

5.1.3 Contingency of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations

Depending on the situation, same activities carried out can be encouraged by different motivation concerning the intrinsic and extrinsic division. Becoming a better player is contingent upon the situation, e.g. it is an intrinsic motivation if the gamer learns for the fun of it, and extrinsic motivation if the gamer has an extrinsic goal, such as being the best among friends (competition, recognition). Collaborative learning can be a source of recognition. Unlocking rewards is a source of feelings such as sense of achievement etc. Competition definitely is a source of all kinds of different feelings and is therefore connected to entertainment. Exploration, although being an intrinsic motivation, can be driven by extrinsic motivation such as competition (finding new ways to play in order to win more games).

5.2 Motivational killers

Next we present a short summary of the motivational killers that was seen present in this study. In the theory chapter we already discussed anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour is clearly not a motivation to play, but is rather a reason not to play. Other things that destroy the motivation to play came up here and there in the interviews, so we decided to collect them under a same topic, motivational killers. Motivational killers are things that diminish or destruct the gamers' motivation to play a game. Motivational killers are presented next in table 5.

Table 5. Motivation killers

Motivations	Motivation killers
Achievement	
Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the flow-balance is not maintained.
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When players are left behind in skill, i.e. are not able to compete. • Unwanted emotional results from disappointments. • Cheating.
Rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the rewards are not meaningful.
Learning	
Becoming a better player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having the time to learn the required skills. • Skill requirements of the game are not what the player seeks.
Learning with awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the awards are not meaningful.
Entertainment	
Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong feelings may be a reason to avoid FPS-games. • Negative feelings such as frustration.
Social	
Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having friends to play with. • Anti-social behaviour.
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the teamwork fails. • Individualistic behaviour by others.
Escapism	
Time requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having time to play the game

6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we answer to the research question, describe the theoretical contribution of this study, present managerial implications, evaluate the validity and reliability and give suggestions for future research.

6.1 Answering the research question

The research question of this study was:

What are the motivations to play First-Person Shooter games?

The results of this study was presented in the end of chapter four (4.8) summary of empirical results. We introduced the motivational categories that form the motivational landscape of FPS-games. These categories were achievement, learning, entertainment, social and escapism. For a more detailed description of the content see chapter four (4), empirical research. We took the discussion further from the basic and static concept of motivational categories by describing the connectedness of the categories and presenting motivational killers from the empirical material. For these, see chapter five (5), discussion.

6.2 Theoretical contribution

In this chapter we discuss the theoretical contribution of this study. This study is the first of its kind to produce a clearly defined category concept of the motivations to play modern FPS-games. It also clarifies the relationships between different categories and divides the motivations into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Jansz & Tanis (2007) studied the appeal of playing FPS-games. They found seven motivations to play (Competition, Interest, Enjoyment, Fantasy, Social interaction, Excitement, Challenge). Their study was an online survey, which mainly tried to confirm whether these factors contribute to the player's motivation to play. These factors lacked a concrete content. As they stated, the only thing they know for sure is that the social interaction motivates, but they do not know how. Frostling-

Henningsson (2009) extended previous research concerning social interaction in virtual context focusing on Counter-Strike and World of Warcraft. In her study she brought concrete content to the social interaction. The existing studies often focus on delivering lists of different motivational factors and testing if they really are there (see e.g. Tychsen *et al.* 2008). They do not offer a comprehensive view to the players' motivational landscape and lack in deepening the subject. Also, they do not describe which of the motivations are intrinsic and extrinsic.

Demetrovics *et al.* (2011) described motivations to play games without searching specific genres (coping, fantasy, skill development, recreation, competition and social). Ryan *et al.* (2006) stated that different game genres have different relations to the motivational variables and fulfil different needs in players. Yee (2006) made a three category concept (achievement, social & immersion) with ten subcategories for MMORPGs. This is not suitable for FPS-games because they are very different in nature, and using these would leave out important motivations.

Gaming is sometimes studied with a notion of user experience (see Sanchez *et al.* 2012; Takatalo *et al.* 2006), which also covers parts of the motivational landscape of gaming. However, most of the gaming research is done using the loosely defined concepts, e.g. flow and immersion (Nacke 2010). These are not well suited to describe the whole motivational landscape of gaming. In this study we have brought together the most commonly studied subjects such as immersion (see Ermi & Mäyrä 2005; Jennett *et al.* 2008), presence (Ryan *et al.* 2006, Frostling-Henningson 2009), suspense (see Vorderer 2011; Klimmt *et al.* 2009) and flow (see Hsu and Lu 2007; Ryan *et al.* 2006; Särkelä *et al.* 2009). Furthermore, we have combined these constructs with other motivational discussions of gaming.

Hainey *et al.* (2011) revealed that gamers with multiplayer preference are significantly motivated by challenge, competition, cooperation and recognition. The results of our study are in line with these findings. The social dimension and competition were the most important motivations to play. This study presents a balanced category concept. We have brought content to the categories and discussed their connections with each other. This study gives structure to a complex and elusive subject, deepens the understanding of the content and reveals the underlying

processes behind it. We discussed how flow can be seen as a balance, as a feeling or as immersion. In this study, we used the notion of flow to describe the balance between a challenge and abilities. Learning was discussed from a motivational perspective. In addition, rewards and awards were separated. (i.e. achieving with rewards and learning with awards). This study addressed the importance of feelings and emotions as a base of enjoyment, which ultimately affects to motivation. This is a highly complicated subject because with games, unlike with traditional entertainment products, the emotional outcomes are a gamble. In the social category we included recognition, which we consider to be a highly important motivation. Furthermore, we gave examples how the sense of recognition emerges. This study serves as a good kick-start for more detailed motivation research particularly in FPS-gaming.

6.3 Managerial implications

Recent hits in Finnish gaming industry, such as Clash of Clans, have made people to think what makes a good game. The first appearance of games may be the same and make people to think that it is a matter of luck, which games succeed. Making a nice graphical appeal to a game can be enough to lure people to buy it. However, it is not enough to keep them playing it. What gets people to play certain games over and over, is what is in the core of the game, i.e. what motivates the players. The motivation category concept of this study gives to game developers a balanced structure for evaluating games in terms of their motivational appeal. The game developers have to identify the core motivations and their interconnections. Furthermore, core motivations are different in each genre. The question is how to get the most out of the core motivations and to avoid activities that function as motivational killers.

Motivations need to be considered not only when designing a new game, but also when updating and adjusting an existing game. In-depth understanding of the player's motivations to play is a vital part of every game company's business decision-making practices. Video game companies should consider motivations to play when they design monetization models for their games. The recent trend is to transform the monetization models to free-to-play. When changing the monetization

model, the new model should not disturb the motivations. As an illustrative example, changing a competitive game to a pay-to-win (win by spending more money), could destroy the core motivation, i.e. competition. We already have examples where game developers managed to destroy the core motivations in their games (see Diablo 3). Furthermore, managers should make sure their companies employ the right personnel that possess the relevant information about players' psychological preferences depending on different games. There is already a trend in mobile gaming to hire psychologists to maximize the revenues from micropayments. We recommend that this knowledge should also be used to enhance the core experience of gaming and not just for maximising the short-term revenues.

The game developers should understand the difference of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. They should understand that the game needs to provide enough intrinsic motivation to keep players interested. Extrinsic motivation should be used as something that enhances the gameplay experience without destroying it.

6.4 Societal implications

Parents of gamers could benefit from this study by understanding more of what is actually happening when their children play. They often only see their children sitting in front of the computer for hours, but they do not really understand why. FPS-games are not about shooting and killing people, or other type of violence and aggression. Of course the games have these elements inside, but they are not real, and are certainly not the motivations to play these games. FPS games are similar to sports. They are about challenge, competition and social interaction.

Interfering with an active game session may lead to aggressive reactions. This may lead to misunderstanding that the child is violent and aggressive because of the gaming. The FPS-gaming is an intensive activity that requires high amounts of cognitive and sensory efforts in order to perform well. The gamers are highly focused on their game tasks. Interference can destroy concentration and therefore individual's ability to perform in the task. This may then lead to e.g. losing of an important match. In addition, in multiplayer games this can weaken the game experience of others in the team. Ultimately, this can lead to a situation where the

child is having a hard time participating in teamwork based social games. For example, parents would not consider interfering with their child's ongoing football match because the room needs to be cleaned.

In terms of time requirements FPS-games are a relatively safe choice compared to MMORPG's. The length of the game session is short and the players do not have to devote an enormous amount of time to keep up with the rest of the players.

6.5 Evaluation of the validity and reliability

The constructs of validity and reliability are not particularly suitable for a qualitative research. Validity describes to what extent a claim, interpretation or conclusion express the subject they were meant to express in the first place. Validity is divided into two parts. The inner validity means the interpretations inner logicity and consistency. The outer validity means the interpretation can be generalized to other contexts as well. Reliability means congruency, accuracy of instrument, objectivity of the instrument and continuity of the phenomenon. (Koskinen *et al.* 2005: 254-255.)

We aimed at improving the reliability of this study by describing in detail the context, research process, methodological choices, data collection and interviewee's profiles. The findings of this study are supposed to describe the context of FPS-games. Therefore, using this framework as such in examining other game genres is not applicable in terms of outer validity. We have tried to understand where and what kind of empirical information to search in order to maintain the consistency of the study.

Observations of research are embedded in the context and must be understood within a context. Temporal and contextual factors constraint generalizability and constitutes the range of the theory. (Whetten 1989.) Detailed description of the context of this study was presented in the chapter four (4), empirical research. We offered a rich and detailed description of both the game genre and the games used in this study.

6.6 Suggestions for future research

In this chapter we present some suggestions for future research. Research suggestions are presented in table 6. This study raises a vast amount of possible research topics. Further research may benefit from the results of this study.

Table 6. Suggestions for future research

Suggestion	Justification
1. How the content of the concept changes in different game genres?	Different game genres require for different content inside the categories. For example, in role-playing games, the category of escapism is most likely a dominant category.
2. A more detailed study of an individual category considering motivation?	We could know more about each individual category. Something might have been missed in this study.
3. Connections of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations?	More knowledge about the connections of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations is needed in order to make some kind of best practices to combine these in games.

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- Interview 7. 26.4.2012

Appendix 1: Guide of the theme interview

This is a checklist. We let the interviewees wander off and tell us the stories they wanted. If they wandered off too far, we guided them back to the subject.

What motivates you to play FPS-games?

What motivates you to play a specific FPS-game?

Achievement

- What kind of challenges you see in FPS-games that motivate you to play?
- What kind of abilities FPS-games require and how these requirements affect to your willingness to play a certain game?
- Does the balance between a challenge and abilities have an affect to your motivation to play a certain game?
- Do you consider yourself to be competitive in nature? How does this affect your motivation to play a certain game?
- Do different game modes affect your motivation to play?
- Do some features outside the actual gameplay (such as statistics etc.) affect to your motivation to play a game?
- How do external rewards affect (positive or negative) to your willingness to play a certain game?

Learning

- Is improving game skills a motivation to play a certain game?
- Do skills requirements in FPS-games affect to your motivation to play?
- Is learning the basic skills enough for you or are you motivated to improve your skills beyond the basic skills? How does this affect to your motivation to play?
- How are you motivated by learning with awards?
- Does learning from other players affect to your motivation to play?

Entertainment

- What kind of entertainment is gaming compared to other type of entertainment (sports, movies etc.)?
- What kind of feelings and emotions emerge while playing games?
- Do these feelings and emotions affect to your motivation to play?
- How does creative use of games affect t your motivation to play?
- How does novelty affect to your motivation to play?

Social

- Does social interaction affect to your willingness to play a certain game?
Does it have a negative impact?

- How cooperation affect to willingness to play a certain game? How about the lack of cooperation?
- Tell us about communication in your gaming.
- Do IRL and virtual friendships have an impact on your willingness to play a certain game?
- How you see the teamwork in FPS games? Is it motivating?
- Does FPS-gaming offer you a sense of recognition and power? Does it motivate you?

Escapism

- Do FPS-games offer an escape from everyday life? Does it have an impact on your willingness to play?
- Does the “realism” in games affect to your motivation to play?
- What is exploration in FPS-games? How does this affect to your motivation to play?
- Do time-requirements affect to your willingness to play or avoid playing a certain game?

What is the most important thing that motivates you to play FPS-games?